

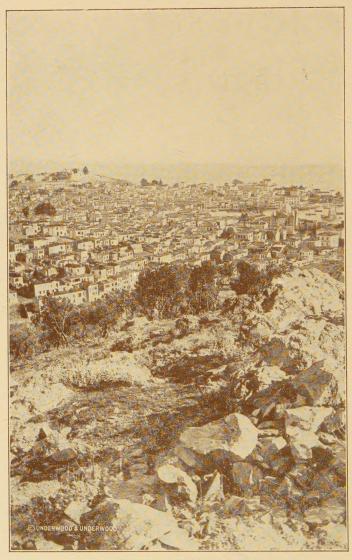




# THE STORY OF THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES



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THE PORT OF MITYLENE, LESBOS Looking eastward over the Ægean Sea toward Asia Minor

# THE STORY OF THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

A NARRATIVE OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EARLY CHURCH

BY

REV. DENIS LYNCH, S.J.



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# THE STORY OF THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

#### CHAPTER I

#### INTRODUCTORY

#### I.—THE ACTS

THE Acts of the Apostles, the fifth of the canonical books of the New Testament, is the inestimable record of an eve-witness of remarkable literary skill, and of singular accuracy and reliability. The continuation of the Gospel story, it is the chief and fullest account of the first thirty years of Christianity after the Descent of the Holy Ghost. The link between the Gospel and the Epistles, it illustrates and enshrines the latter, and is in many instances luminously illustrated by them. Often most detailed, and at times most rapidly abridged, it is a rich and graphic narrative of the propagation of the Christian faith throughout a great portion of the Roman Empire up to the closing years of the great Apostle of the Gentiles. The Church of Christ is seen quickly perfecting its essential

organization, diffusing with uniformity its distinctive practices, making use of Jew and Greek and Roman, however hostile or contemptuous, availing itself of the Pax Romana—the undisputed, universal sway of Rome—to inaugurate the last and greatest phase of the religious dispensation of God to mankind. A remedy is applied to the extreme moral perversion of the human race; the wall of separation is broken down, and races and nations which had forever stood apart are united by a spirit of love and liberty breathed everywhere.

It is but a hopeless kind of so-called criticism that would admit the authenticity of the Acts, as even conservative rationalists now do, and deny or attempt to explain away what the Acts chiefly insist upon — the fulfilment of the prophecies and promises of Christ, the descent of the Holy Ghost, and the miraculous and supernatural character of the Christian propaganda. Attempt to rationalize Christianity, and you eviscerate or annihilate it. It did what human reason and human nature never did or could do; admit, then, that it was what it proclaims itself to be — the work of God.

To the Christian mind, and to rightly applied reason, this veracious history, the only acceptable record of the early days, describes the incredible transformation of the apostles; the immediate expansion of the Church; the promised conversion of the Gentiles — widely begun, at least; the development of the whole plan of the kingdom of God; the fulfilment of that word, that "all flesh shall see the salvation of God." The converts are won by a supreme argument — the only one possible — the sense of the presence of God amongst them, a new spirit of knowledge and love, the power of miracles, the irresistible sway of the Holy Ghost. The Divine Spirit descends everywhere; He fills St. Stephen; directs Saints Philip, Barnabas, and Paul; prophesies by human mouths; multiplies the faithful; and holds all together.

#### II.—ST. LUKE

We are singularly fortunate in the historian St. Luke. There was perhaps never an ancient writer better tested. He was an eye-witness, as he says. His painstaking accuracy is self-evident. His acknowledged authenticity through the Christian centuries is unsurpassable. In recent times he has been most severely criticized, bitterly opposed, by some ridiculed. Fortunately, his minute local, personal, and historical details have afforded ample opportunities for proving the veracity of the narrator and the truth of his marvelous story. It is absolutely astonishing that he never takes a false step through all the maze of geographical, municipal,

religious, and political detail. All adverse criticism has fallen through; all existing data of archeology always support St. Luke, and this in the most minute and obscure details, in which no forger ever could have avoided mistakes. His statements are incontestable, whether he tells of the pro-consul of Cyprus, the politarchs of Thessalonica, the prætors of Philippi, or the Ephesian "sweepers" of the temple of Diana. Officials may have had their titles exceptionally or transitorily; but they had them as St. Luke describes. His narrative is supported by the history of social or national changes and events occurring at the time of which he writes. Coins, medals, inscriptions found in our day bear, in condemnation of preceding critics, the very names or titles written by St. Luke. No wonder, then, that the critics "have found themselves constrained, step by step, to order back their attacking lines, and to acknowledge that the majority of their assaults have been triumphantly repulsed." (Abbé Fouard, "Last Years of St. Paul.") "Undesigned coincidences by scores," conformity with the Epistles, and with sacred and profane history. prove St. Luke "demonstrably accurate in the minutest details."

Eusebius, the historian, says that St. Luke was born in Antioch, the capital of Syria; and although he has the most intimate acquaintance with Jewish customs, is thought by many, be-

cause of his style, not to have been a Jew. He was a physician by profession, as he is called by St. Paul, and as he reveals in his writings. St. Jerome supposes him to be "the brother whose praise is in the Gospel through all the Churches." (2 Cor. viii. 18.) According to the manifestly incontrovertible testimony of early Fathers, St. Peter founded and for several years governed the Church of Antioch; here St. Luke was one of the distinguished converts. At Jerusalem he made the acquaintance of St. James and the leading Christians. He was familiar with St. Barnabas, who was sent as a delegate from Jerusalem to Antioch. He stayed with St. Paul in the house of Philip, called the Evangelist, the most famous of the seven deacons after St. Stephen. He is mentioned three times with St. Mark in the Epistles of St. Paul; he shows his acquaintance with the Gospel of St. Mark, and knows even the name of the girl who admitted St. Peter, after his deliverance, into the house of St. Mark's mother. It is needless to multiply instances and proofs. Nothing can be more clear than St. Luke's own word — that he had "diligently attained to all things from the beginning." Throughout his entire narrative he records what he had seen himself, or had from "eye-witnesses and ministers of the word."

It is supposed by some that St. Paul wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews during his two years' captivity at Cæsarea, and that he availed himsel of the literary skill of St. Luke - a supposition not at all unlikely. St. Luke may have similarly assisted St. Peter in writing his first Epistle for to some it shows traces of the style and lan guage of the Evangelist. His influence, too, or the vocabulary of St. Paul is curiously traced especially during the times that St. Luke is known to have been the companion of the great Apostle He was with St. Paul during his first Roman im prisonment of two years; and then, according to St. Jerome and the general opinion, wrote his story of the Acts. And during the last hopeles days before the Apostle's execution, the belove physician was alone with him. It is curious and delightful to note how the words which are dea and frequent in St. Paul recur similarly in th writings of his disciple St. Luke - "grace," "t believe," "faith," "the Holy Spirit," etc.; and that certain rare expressions are not found excep in St. Paul and the author of the Acts.

#### III.—AUTHENTICITY OF THE ACTS

Until the end of the eighteenth century, none denied that St. Luke was the author of the Acts of the Apostles. Antiquity accepted the Church's teaching regarding the Scriptures, expecially as Our Lord and His apostles confirme the authority of the Sacred Writings. The

Fathers solved with reverence apparent difficulties, as Catholics do now. The scholastics did likewise; and even the humanists confined themselves to the more or less correct re-editing of the sacred text. Yet in former times, "internal evidence" was also carefully considered. For instance, Origen held that St. Paul could not have been the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews because of its finished Greek style; and his disciple Dionysius would not accept the Apocalypse as the work of St. John. In fact, the French priest, Père Simon, was the first scientific critic of the larger aspects of the Bible, and the forerunner of the modern "higher critics." Carlstadt and Hobbes began the work of uncritical rejection. In the eighteenth century, German rationalism, or rationalistic and liberal Protestantism, the outcome of anti-Christian speculation, inspired in part at least by English Deism and skepticism, began, in sheer hostility to the supernatural, and especially to miracles and prophecy. its distinctive "criticism" of the New Testament. Thus Eichhorn created "higher criticism." Soon there were countless dissentient hypotheses and dreams. Holy Writ was only poetry, parable, or legend. It was composed of shreds by various authors. It consisted largely of myths, and often of contradictions. Some parts of it were of transitory, others of permanent value. Such were the ipse dixits, which rejected most solid tradition

for internal arguments: that is, for fancies. According to Hegelian evolution, all Jewish religion was not a revelation, but a natural development from polytheism to Deism. Its scriptures were the composition of unknown authors, repeatedly recast and re-edited, receiving various additions and undergoing successive "reforms." Hence all the Bible-Babel theories and controversies down to those of the astral myths. No wonder conservative men said that such origins were unknown in all the history of literature. There was the most irreverent excess in the rationalistic criticism of the New Testament in the eighteenth century, going to the extremes of imputing dishonesty to Our Lord Himself. The "Life of Jesus" by Strauss (1835) marked a more advanced stage. Here, Our Lord is but a rabbi mythified, or invested with mythical qualities. Similar is Renan's "Life." And the Tübingen School finished by destroying the authenticity of all the Gospels. Thus "faith (and Christianity) was severed from its historical credentials as found in the New Testament."

There has been a reaction against "the monstrous arguments of the credulous skepticism of the Tübingen School" (Dean Farrar), and "it is not worth while to discuss vague hypotheses which have no support in history and no coherence in themselves" (Bauer).

In their destructive analysis of St. Luke, the

higher critics have over-reached themselves completely. In this instance they have gone directly against internal evidence. The authorship of the Acts has been attributed wholly or partially to St. Timothy, to St. Titus, and to Silas. Some advanced the theory that St. Luke but put together the writings of others; or that he, or St. Timothy, kept a diary, indicated by the plural of the personal pronoun, and that others furnished the narrative setting. All this unrestrained fancy is refuted by the indisputable and remarkable uniformity of style throughout. And this is one of the points into which the conservative critics have gone most deeply. Harnack, for instance, counted one hundred and thirty words entirely characteristic of St. Luke in his Gospel and in the Acts; and of these, one hundred and ten are found in the so-called diary (it contains in all only ninety-seven verses). In the whole text of the Acts, as in St. Luke's Gospel, there is a special and most remarkable grammatical similitude of expression. The style, manner of narration, leading ideas, doctrine, are all the same. Hence the rationalist Renan says: "A thing beyond all doubt is that the Acts have the same author as the third Gospel, and are a continuation of the same. One finds no necessity to prove this fact, which has never seriously been denied." "The two works taken together prove a whole, having the same style, presenting the same characteristic expressions, and citing the Scriptures in the same manner." ("Les Apôtres," Introd.)

Of the various early witnesses to the authenticity of St. Luke, it suffices to cite St. Irenæus, born, some suppose, long before A. D. 130, disciple of St. Polycarp, who was the disciple of St. John. The incontrovertible testimony of St. Irenæus presents to us the tradition of Asia Minor, Gaul, and Rome. Great critics, such as Harnack and Paley, have studiously illustrated the entire conformity of the Acts with the Epistles of St. Paul, as with contemporary history and historical monuments. Of the alleged "blunders" attributed to St. Luke by the German and other rationalists of the nineteenth century, Harnack says that they are shameful only to the rationalists.

## IV.—SUBJECT-MATTER AND CHRONOLOGY

The book of the Acts has been called the Gospel of the Holy Ghost. In the four Gospels we have the story "of all things which Jesus began to do and teach"; in the Acts the story of the operations of the Holy Spirit. Our Lord formed and taught His disciples; the Holy Spirit makes them perfect in knowledge, virtue and power; and employs them as instruments for the conversion of the nations. We see, then, in the Acts the virtues, zeal, and sufferings of the apostles, and the first

splendid outburst of Christian life. In the first seven chapters is described the establishment of the Church in Jerusalem, the city of the temple, the high priest and the Sanhedrin; from the eighth to the twelfth, the beginning amongst the Gentiles and the conversion of their great Apostle, St. Paul; from the thirteenth to the end, the apostolic labors of St. Paul, interrupted by his visit to the Council of Jerusalem. In the first chapters, St. Peter is the leading figure, directing, organizing, deciding; in the second portion of the Acts, St. Luke, being the companion of St. Paul, described the latter's great missionary enterprises through the Grecian world-Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Greece. The Evangelist addresses his sacred record to Theophilus, to whom he gives the same title of dignity which St. Paul gives to the procurators Felix and Festus. Theophilus, it would seem, was a noble convert of Antioch, an acquaintance and fellowcitizen of St. Luke, possibly the convert mentioned by St. Clement, in whose house St. Peter fixed his see.

Hitherto it has been impossible to fix exact dates for the events narrated by St. Luke. The death of King Herod Agrippa, which occurred, according to Josephus, in A. D. 44, marks, it is thought, the only definite date in the first twenty years of the Church's history. Soon after that event, began the first mission journey of St. Paul.

The death of St. Stephen is supposed to have happened in the year 37, because the death of Tiberius in that year appears to have afforded the Jews an opportunity to usurp the power of life and death. The conversion of St. Paul followed soon after. The Apostle spent three years. either entire or in part, in Arabia, then visited Jerusalem, and returned to the Council held there fourteen years later. The Council is usually assigned to the year 52, on the supposition, amongst others, that St. Peter left Rome at the expulsion of the Jews by Claudius in that year. Twelve or thirteen years are supposed to have elapsed between the Council and the end of St. Paul's first captivity in Rome; that is, his second mission must have occupied three years; the third, four and a half, three of which were spent at Ephesus. He was about five years a captive - two at Cæsarea, less than one during his vovage to Rome, and some two years in Rome. The epoch of the departure of St. Paul from Cæsarea is fixed more or less by the succession of Festus to Felix as procurator — in 60 or 61. It is commonly supposed that St. Paul was set free in the fourth year of Nero — perhaps in 64 A. D. The great missionary activity of St. Paul filled especially the twelve years from 45 to 57.

#### CHAPTER II

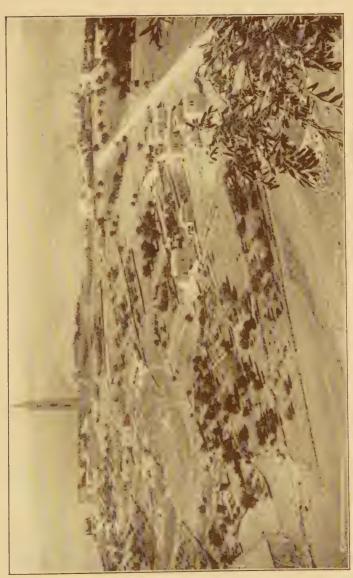
THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD AND THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY GHOST

## I.— THE ASCENSION (Acts i. 1–12.)

IN THE first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles is found the record of the last deeds and words of Our Blessed Lord before His ascension into heaven. They are amongst His most important words and deeds. "He showed Himself alive after His passion, by many proofs, for forty days appearing to them, and speaking of the Kingdom of God." The Greek word for "proofs" means "indubitable tokens," "infallible proofs." days with His disciples reached the sacred number, forty - perhaps to outbalance His brief forty hours of death. And was it not fitting, that, as Moses received the ancient Law during the forty days on Mt. Sinai, He should take forty days for the definiteness and completeness of His new revelation which we can never know except in so far as it has been realized in the subsequent history of the Church? Our Lord's usual name

for the Church was "the kingdom of God." What did He say of the marvelous institution, of its organization and history, during this intense and unshadowed period when He was "new-risen from the sacrament of death," when His apostles' minds were enlarged and elevated by the astounding Vision, when all their preceding knowledge of Him, and all their sense of Scripture, were spiritualized by His resurrection from the dead? Perhaps this is the meaning of His "commanding them by the Holy Ghost." They understood better; and the message is more extraordinary than ever — these weak instruments must be witnesses to the uttermost part of the earth!

He eats with them for the last time, or "assembles" them — whichever the reading may be. The "eating" may have been — naturally, perhaps, would have been — a partaking of the Blessed Eucharist, and at the usual hour of the noon repast. The "assembling" would, it may well be, throw some light on a preceding word of St. Luke in his Gospel (xxiv. 50), that "He led them out as far as Bethania"; thus turning aside, as has been supposed, on His way heavenward, to visit the family of Lazarus, which He loved. "He commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but should wait for the promise of the Father, which you have heard (saith He) by My mouth," and had not before



THE SITE OF CHRIST'S ASCENSION THE MOUNT OF OLIVES,



quite understood. "John indeed baptized with water "-- baptized some of those same disciples; but John also foretold a great baptism "in the Holy Ghost and fire" (Matt. iii. 11); and this is now about to be fully accomplished. These and similar things may have been said as Our Lord led His little band out from the city and as He was ascending Mt. Olivet; for He is represented as being "raised up" "when He had said these things." The theme of His discourse is revealed in the question of "them who were come together," "wilt Thou at this time restore" - it is the present tense in Greek — "the kingdom to Israel?" They knew that the scepter had departed, and that the prophets had foretold the restoration of Israel and the kingdom of the Messias. Their dear Master gently diverts their thoughts - "It is not for you to know the times or moments [the seasons or opportunities and burden of the times] which the Father hath put in His own power." But let them be consoled; for there shall be a spiritual and a greater Israel, with a power to which it never aspired: "You shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you; and you shall be witnesses unto Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and even to the uttermost part of the earth." They shall tell forever the wondrous story of His life and love.

It is an ancient tradition, testified by St. Pros-

per, that the Ascension took place at noon. was crucified at that hour, thus sinking to the extreme of a hideous death before His triumphant foes. It was but just He should arise above the vanguished city to the highest glory in the strength and splendor of the noon-day sun. We may, perhaps, take the bright cloud which received Him as indicating the radiance of the day. Then came the ineffable parting of love. His disciples were the objects of His inexpressible fondness and zeal. Here was the penitent Magdalen whom He loved, who had stood by the Cross. Here was the Mother who had known Him best. In the sorrowful ways of life He had been their companion and Divine Friend. Now the human bonds will be broken and He must leave them forever.

They were standing on the center of the wavy crest of Olivet — not a sharp ridge, but a level space, fairly wide. It is not much less than 2700 feet above the level of the sea, and some 300 above the city, from which it is distant in a straight line above half a mile across the valley of Josaphat. The view, especially to those who were standing there, was rich in memories and hope. The city of Jerusalem, with its history, its sin, and its symbolism, was spread beneath. On its nearer edge, steep over Gethsemani, glittered the roofs of the temple, the heart and head of the nation. Just beyond its westward wall

were Calvary and the Tomb. The plains, valleys, and hills near the city were redolent of the deeds of David and the Machabees. Bethlehem was but six miles south on the verge of its upland. Twenty miles to the east fell the Jordan into the Dead Sea, and there was the ford of Josue, Elias, and John. Across were the mountains of Moab: and in their bosom, Phasga and Nebo. Far away to the west, across the whole land, on that sunbright day, the Mediterranean was gleaming with its "islands of the sea." Around it lay the world of Greece and Rome, soon to be Christian. Reversing the falsehood of the Temptation, the Master "showed them all the kingdom of the world in a moment of time; and He said to them, 'To you will I give all this power, and all the glory of them, for to Me they are delivered." (Luke iv. 6.) "You shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and even to the uttermost part of the earth."

"And when He had said these things, while they looked on, He was raised up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight." He was not "parted" from them by a fiery chariot, nor snatched in a whirlwind, as Elias; but was slowly "raised up" while blessing them with a fondness that no mind can imagine. The Greek word describes the cloud as forming a throne or footstool beneath Him; and all the Greek words employed express the rapt intensity of the heavenward gaze of the little company of chosen friends. How long they looked we know not. At length there came two angels, whose vesture harmonized with the radiance of the hour, and recalled them from their ecstasy. "Ye men of Galilee"—He, too, was a Galilean; and His envoys will never have aught more to do with "the weak and needy element of Judaism" which had become the cerements of truth and life. "He shall so come"— "He shall return in the same manner," says the Greek — on the Last Day, to judge, in the same great scene, the living and the dead. The disciples, hitherto so afflicted when He spoke of leaving them, now, strange to say, "adoring went back into Jerusalem with great joy" (Luke xxiv. 52) — not disheartened at the separation, not terrified at their mission, but with hearts inebriated with the overflowing joy of the Ascension.

# II.—THE ELECTION OF ST. MATTHIAS (Acts i. 13–26.)

They return to the "upper room," henceforward forever famous, and present an attractive picture of union, simplicity, and prayer, men and women together, contrary to the oriental custom — the most faithful women, with "Mary, the Mother of Jesus," and His brethren, that is,

His relatives not of the Twelve. St. Peter, always named first, and evidently acting as superior, proposes the election of one to the vacant place of Judas. In his address he offers some sad details about the fallen apostle. Judas was not only an apostle, but had exercised "this ministry": he had preached, performed miracles, cast out demons. The fearful fact is added by St. Peter that the traitorous companion, "being hanged, burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out"; that this filled even Jerusalem with horror, so that they named the place of the occurrence "the field of blood"; and that by this frightful death the sinner went "to his own The Prince of the Apostles confirmed his thought by words from the 108th and the dreadful sixty-eighth psalm. The expression "being hanged" is in Greek "falling prostrate, or headlong"; which gives the impression that Judas, as he was hanging himself, threw himself violently forward, apparently over a rough precipice. St. Peter says, perhaps by a figure of speech, that Judas "possessed" the field, which the Gospels represent as having been bought by the Jewish priests with the money paid to the traitor for the blood of Our Lord. At least he took possession of it for his own destruction. The Greek is translated by some "he prepared, or acquired." The fatal name prevailed over the pious one which the unjust men would have given.

St. Peter proposes that a twelfth apostle be chosen from those who had been in the "company" of Our Lord since the baptism, and especially since the testimony of John, as they themselves had been. The one direct and essential function of the apostle referred to by St. Peter is that "he must be made a witness with us of the resurrection." They proposed two of equal merit; and, according to Jewish precedent and Scriptural practice, they call upon God "to show whether of these two He had chosen." They do not venture to choose themselves, as we imagine they might have done; but clearly acknowledge the necessity of a divine vocation. Perhaps they themselves define the sign asked of God, as Eliezer did in Genesis xxiv. 14. It is not too much to suppose, as many have supposed, that, in a matter so serious, they acted by a divine instinct; and that after the choice, in order that St. Matthias might not be considered inferior to the others, there was some manifest sign of divine approval. Hence all the apostolic band immediately and unanimously approved of the choice; for the Greek word, "he was numbered with the eleven apostles," means, "he was acknowledged by common suffrage, or united voice."

Of St. Joseph, who was not chosen, we know more than of the apostle St. Matthias. He is considered to have been the brother of St. James the Less, and son of Mary, wife of Alpheus, men-

tioned in St. Matthew xxvii. 56, and again in St. Matthew xiii. 55, as one of the "brethren" of Our Lord. This refutes clearly enough the stupid and partizan statement, so pertinaciously sustained, that Our Lord had natural brothers, born of the Blessed Mother and St. Joseph. The candidate for the apostleship was called Joseph the Just, because of his life, and Barsabas, that is, "son of Sabas," or "son of the oath, or the returning, or conversion." He is not, of course, the same as the famous "Joseph, surnamed Barnabas" (Acts iv. 36), the illustrious companion of St. Paul. Our Joseph Barsabas is said to have been bishop of Eleutheropolis in Palestine, and is venerated as a martyr on July 20.

The name of St. Matthias means "gift of God," or "given by God." Of him almost the only thing venerable tradition says, is that he was remarkable for his spiritual learning, his prudence, and facility of speech; and that, with hands extended toward heaven, he died a martyr.

## III.—THE COMING OF THE HOLY GHOST

(Acts ii. 1-47.)

The ineffable mystery of the descent of the Holy Ghost was accomplished, not - strange to say - in the glorious temple of Herod, which occupied the site of the sacred temple of Solomon; but in a private house — in the upper room of the Last Supper. This Cenacle has had upparalleled Christian memories — the institution of the Blessed Eucharist and the priesthood, the vision of the risen Saviour, the election of the twelfth apostle, and the coming of the Holy Spirit in the form of tongues of fire. Such a spot could never have been forgotten; and we still venerate either the shrine erected by the Crusaders, or its successor re-erected in the same form by the Franciscan guardians of the Holy Land. It is a large hall divided by pillars supporting Gothic arches, and is now in the hands of the Moslems.

The Christian company, returning from Olivet, elevated and inspired by the continued presence of their Divine Master returned from the dead, and by the rapturous contemplation of His ascension, now at length understand clearly His promise of the Holy Ghost. Nothing could be more definite and emphatic. Their beloved Master was to leave them; but He would send another Person like Himself, who would be distinctly a Consoler and not a cause of sorrow. This Holy Spirit would teach them all things, and abide with them forever. Now in a few days He would come. And when He came, it is absolutely astonishing how the disciples, hitherto slow of mind and heart even in the plainest things, now realize

in the clearest manner the presence and action of the Holy Ghost. All is done by Him - the apostles will teach that not even a good thought can be entertained without His grace. They are clearly convinced that the Holy Spirit presided over what has been called their first Council in Jerusalem: hence their decree begins, "It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us" (Acts xv. 28). St. Stephen is filled with the Holy Ghost, and so speaks and does signs and wonders in the midst of the people. The spirit of God carries off St. Philip, the deacon; and he begins to announce with marvelous effect the Word of God to those who never hitherto had drawn near the chosen people, as well as to the Jews themselves and their proselvtes. The Holy Ghost selects Saints Paul and Barnabas for the apostolate of the Gentiles. They find certain disciples, baptized only in the baptism of John; and they ask them whether they have received the Holy Ghost. But these answer that they know not if there be a Holy Ghost; and immediately the Divine Spirit is communicated to them. Most astonishing of all is it, that the ordinary ministry and means of action of the apostles is "to give the Holy Ghost": all who are baptized receive Him, as do all who are ordained priests and bishops. In fact, the Holy Spirit is "poured out" in each Christian heart; He prays in the souls of the faithful, He testifies to them

that they are the children of God, and their bodies, dust though they are, are the temples of the Holy Ghost. A new doctrine, surely; and a divine one.

It was Pentecost, the anniversary of the terrors of Sinai, of the giving of the Law, and of the formation of the Hebrew people as a theocracy. or nation governed by God. It was the hour at which the multitudes were passing to the Temple. Suddenly, without any natural cause or warning, a "mighty wind" came, and filled the house where the apostles were assembled. "And there appeared to them parted tongues as it were of fire, and it sat upon every one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost; and they began to speak with divers tongues according as the Holy Ghost gave them to speak." "All" the faithful company was there, therefore including the holy women, whose position is radically changed in Christianity, owing, unquestionably, to Our Lord's own relations with His Mother. In the Greek of St. Luke, the "parted" tongues appear to have been divided as separate parts of a whole; and the employment of the singular number for "sat upon every one" seems to indicate that they were lambent flames from one undivided center. It is characteristic and impressive that the disciples "began immediately to speak"; and their speech must have been extraordinary indeed to attract thousands

of the passing throng; and still more extraordinary in that all, no matter what their language, understood the words of St. Peter, presumably expressed in one tongue; but marvelous beyond measure in the conversion from Judaism of three thousand a few days after the Crucifixion by a hitherto unlettered and terror-stricken Galilean fisherman. The discourse of St. Peter was, we may suppose, spoken in one language, but from the expression of St. Luke, the inspired brethren spoke in different languages not their own.

We can not fail to admire the boldness and power of St. Peter. This new-made preacher expounds the Scriptures with such knowledge and heavenly influence, using "very many other words to testify and exhort" besides what we find in the brief summary of St. Luke; and puts before them with such fearless vehemence the naturally most unwelcome and awful truth that they had crucified the Messias, the lowly Jesus of Nazareth, that the hearts of the multitude are moved to repentance: they believe and are baptized - and "receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Stranger still, they persevere in the daily reception of the Blessed Eucharist; and selling all they have, possess everything in common, joyfully leading a life of prayer; and, "having favor with all the people" of deicide Jerusalem, they increase daily and largely in number.

The speech of St. Peter began with the words of the prophet Joel, to whom, as to the apostle. nothing else was so important in the sequence of history as the first and the second coming of the Lord, blended in prophetic vision. Community of life was not quite unknown in Jerusalem. The example of the Essenes was remarkable; and the numerous bands of the priests serving in the Temple, lived after this fashion. But why did these first Christians sell all? Their master had praised and sanctified poverty. and recommended the practice of it to all who would be perfect. We may be sure that there were no half measures for those inspired souls, who lived in the midst of wonders. Moreover, nothing was more distinct, definite, and terrible than Our Lord's prediction of the approaching destruction of the city. Within a generation not a stone would be left upon a stone in house or Temple, and the children of haughty, pharisaical Sion would be trodden down in death in its streets. The converts, therefore, would acquire or retain no permanent possessions — a fortunate plan, which went largely to save them from the common destruction.

The multitude of Jews, coming from different countries and understanding no common language, are so enumerated by St. Luke as to show how confusedly they were blended. There were inhabitants of Judea, and Jews from afar, with

proselytes - "Jews also and proselytes"; that is, in Greek both Jews and converts to Judaism - from Rome, Elam (probably Persia), Pontus, and Asia (probably the region about Propontis), and so on - "devout men out of every nation under heaven." This probably explains, at least to some degree, their ready acceptance of proffered grace. That is, they had not approved of the crime of the Sanhedrin, of which, in all likelihood, they had been shocked, but overawed, witnesses. Hence they were not of the hardened Pharisees who still mocked, saying that the apostles were filled with "sweet wine" - a falsehearted taunt easily refuted; for the Jews did not eat or drink before nine o'clock in the morning, nor, we are told, until noon, on their solemn feasts.

It is needless to add that "the breaking of bread" is St. Luke's (and St. Paul's) expression for the Blessed Eucharist. In Acts ii. 42, its sacred character is shown by being mentioned in connection with religious teaching and prayer—the Evangelist would certainly not so speak of ordinary food; and it was distributed "from house to house" necessarily, because it would be impossible in the temple, nor would the Cenacle suffice. We see, too, that for such a multitude, and during the absence or imprisonment of the apostles, the Blessed Sacrament must have been thus early "reserved."

#### CHAPTER III

### PROGRESS AND PERSECUTION

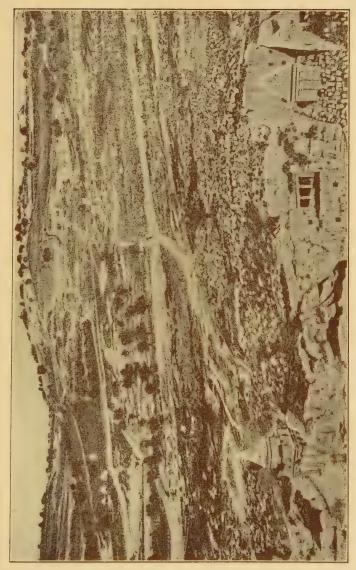
## I.— THE FIRST MIRACLE AND IMPRISONMENT OF THE APOSTLES

(Acts iii. 1 — iv. 31.)

THE FIRST recorded miracle of the apostles is that performed by St. Peter in favor of the man who, being more than forty years of age, had been deformed from birth. This extraordinary deed filled all the people "with wonder and amazement," and led to the conversion of five thousand men. It led, too, to the first persecution.

The miraculous cure was effected at the Beautiful Gate to the temple. This superb construction of Herod the Great, not quite finished in the days of Our Saviour, was set on an area artificially enlarged to the dimensions of a thousand feet square. It was situated immediately within the southeastern angle of the city walls, and looked down abruptly on the valley of the Cedron, or of Josaphat. It consisted of open concentric courts, rising toward the center, one above the others. Almost in the middle stood the altar

of holocausts, on the bare rock, which was the threshing-floor of Ornan, and summit of the eminence called Mount Moria. This immense mass of rock is now in the middle, and occupies a great part of the relatively small and tawdry Mosque of Omar. There are still portions of the sacred edifices erected on the venerable spot by the Crusaders, and especially, but a little way removed, the almost perfect Gothic oratory of the Templar Knights. Even now, in this half-deserted area, play the fountains, fed as of old from Solomon's Pools below Bethlehem. On the southern side of the esplanade, the Mosque of Aksa, which was Justinian's basilica of the Presentation of Our Lady, stands on the site of the palace of Solomon. At the northwestern corner, the Turkish barracks have taken the place of the Prætorium of Pilate. And along by the eastern margin, just inside the city wall, ran the lofty colonnade of the retired Porch of Solomon, where the doctors loved to teach, and where Gentiles as well as Jews could assemble. The Porch was on the same level as the Court of the Gentiles, the lowest, largest, and outermost of the three concentric courts which surrounded the Holy Place. The Beautiful Gate is supposed to have stood at the top of the steps which led up from the Court of the Gentiles to that of the Israelites. Thus it would be on the eastern side and in front of the Holy Place. It was the largest and most ornamental of the outer gates; and on this account, as well as from its position, was the most frequented. Here, day by day, sat the cripple, hoping to receive alms from the passing throng. St. Peter chose his occasion well. It was one of the accustomed hours of prayer - three in the afternoon. The apostle knew what an impression the miracle would make. Hence he fixes the attention of the deformed man, and, no doubt, of the crowd, so that there may be no gainsaving. "Peter, with John, fastening his eves upon him, said: Look upon us. But he looked earnestly upon them . . . But Peter said: Silver and gold I have none; but what I have, I give thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, arise and walk. And taking him by the right hand, he lifted him up: and forthwith his feet and soles received strength; and he, leaping up, stood and walked, and went in with them into the temple, walking and leaping and praising God." (iii. 4-8.) The Latin words stupor and extasis, which correspond with the Greek, are much stronger than the English "wonder" and "amazement." Extasis, which is the same in Greek, means the state of being beside oneself, a state of mental aberration. The use of the two words together intensifies the meaning. Thus St. Luke described the astonishment of the multitude. They knew the deformed man well; and as he in his exaltation of spirit "continued to hold" Saints Peter and



THE TOMBS OF THE VALLEY OF JOSAPHAT



John, "all the people ran to them" to Solomon's Porch. St. Peter had bidden the man to mark well the manner of the miracle; that is, by the power of the Holy Name. Now, in his address, he asks the multitude why they are astonished that the God of their fathers, who had glorified His Son Jesus by raising Him from the dead, should, in virtue of the Holy Name, have "given perfect soundness to the cripple in the sight of them all." With surprising boldness he tells them that they had "denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto them; but the Author of Life they killed." The discourse had the quality of apostolic mercy and zeal. St. Peter pities their ignorance, and exhorts them to repentance. "The times of refreshment," spoken of by the prophets, and so ardently desired, are to come through Jesus, in whom all things must be "restored," or made new: of Him all the prophets spoke; "and you," he said, "are the children of the prophets and of the testament": to you first is the message of salvation sent. Here the Apostle was violently interrupted and seized by the temple guard, acting under eye and order of the adherents of the high priest. These were the Sadducees, an Epicurean sect of corrupt men, who denied the resurrection from the dead, and who were all the more enraged because it was proclaimed to be through the merits and power of the crucified Nazarene.

Before the Crucifixion, the Sadducees, for a while at least, were more indifferent or contemptuous than the Pharisees toward the mission and even the reproaches of Our Lord. But Annas and Caiphas had condemned Him; and the impression made upon the people by the apostles and their followers, and their activity thus centering in the Temple, stung the pride and self-interest of the all-dominant priestly faction. Annas was considered by the Jews the legitimate high priest; and whether in this sense solely, or because he alternated in office every second year with his son-in-law Caiphas, the aged, avaricious, and merciless man now figures as the chief persecutor of the infant Church. St. Peter was imprisoned over night, and probably in the house of the high priest. It may have been the same place in which his Divine Master was kept and mocked the night before His Passion.

Next day the apostles are brought up before the council of Annas, Caiphas, John, apparently a son of Annas, and all that Sadducean band of rulers. It is the same place in which St. Peter had denied his Master. But now there is no denial, no fear. They ask, "By what power and name have you done this?" They will not say "miracle." And St. Peter proclaims before them "the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God hath raised from

the dead. . . . Neither is there salvation in any other." The priestly council is astonished, "seeing the constancy of Peter and of John, understanding that they were illiterate and ignorant men. . . . Seeing the man also who had been healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it." Then the members of the council confer with one another, putting almost the same questions as at the trial of Our Lord -- "What shall we do? For we can not deny the miracle, and all the people will follow them." The believers in the new Faith were poor; the teachers fishermen from Galilee; the dreadful triumph over the Crucified quite recent. The people, too, were in admiration of the Christians: the Sadducees were clever politicians: it was better to affect disdain, and dismiss the accused with a threat to teach no more. Peter and John, answering, said to them: If it be just in the sight of God to hear you rather than God, judge ye." The conviction and constancy of the apostles can not be broken, they "can not but speak the things which they had seen and heard." And they return joyously to their own company, and relate all that was said to them: "who, with one accord, lifted up their voice to God," and uttered their first prayer which has come down to us. "And when they had prayed" - asking miraculous help from Heaven - "the

place was moved wherein they were assembled. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost; and they spoke the word of God with confidence."

# II.— COMMUNITY OF GOODS: ANANIAS AND SAPHIRA: SECOND IMPRISONMENT

(Acts iv. 32 — v. 42.)

"And the multitude of believers had but one heart and one soul: neither did any one say that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but that all things were common unto them . . . For neither was there any one needy among them; for as many of them as were owners of lands or houses sold them, and brought the price of the things they sold, and laid it down before the feet of the apostles; and the distribution was made to every one according as he had need."

This extraordinary example of charity, simplicity, voluntary poverty, religion, and community of goods was the precious seed from which Christianity was to grow amidst unparalleled difficulties. It was all-important to preserve it pure. A little leaven would easily corrupt the whole mass, for it was small and far from being at its ease. This voluntary poverty was, as the word implies, not obligatory; and it existed only in Jerusalem. The custom came, however, as we see, and as it must have come, under apostolic

authority. It was a matter of justice to distribute fairly and charitably the common fund. Hence the fault of violation. It might possibly be held that the land sold by Ananias and Saphira was only held in trust by them, for the Greek word expressing their frauds means "to embezzle"; and in this sense could be explained the word of St. Peter: "Whilst it remained, did it not remain to thee?" From the Greek, too, it would appear that they offered the Apostle only a small part of the price. Some think they made the offering of the land by vow. It is supposed by some of the greatest of the ancient Fathers that Ananias and Saphira were saved. Some consider their death a natural result of shame and remorse. St. Peter, as far as we know, had no idea of the approaching death of Ananias: he makes no threat whatsoever. But his words, as well as the sudden death, show there was question of an evil example that would be very injurious. Even from his reproach and the punishment it does not follow with certainty that the guilty pair committed a mortal sin, although it looks as if they did. We must notice, also, that the Apostle did not try to "catch" Saphira in her statement; but, on the contrary, she seems to have immediately told a lie when she appeared; for St. Peter "answered"—at least according to the Greek -" tell me, woman, whether you sold the land for so much?" In any case, these sudden deaths are a rare example of punishment under the Law of Love. Having seen the fate of Ananias, the Apostle understood that that of Saphira would be similar.

One case of renunciation of private property was especially noteworthy. It was that of the illustrious St. Barnabas, the companion of St. Paul. He was a Levite, born in Cyprus, where his possession of land would not be against the Mosaic law. We are told by the early historians that he was one of the seventy-two disciples, and that, with his cousin St. Mark, he had followed Our Lord's footsteps from the beginning of His public ministry. He was distinguished by the facility and unction of his religious discourses, and hence was called by the apostles "Son of Consolation." In Hebrew his name means "Son of Prophecy"; and "prophecy" was taken in a wide sense for explanation of the Scripture. The copies of the Scriptures preserved and read in the synagogues were written, like their originals, in the old Hebrew and Chaldaic tongues, which, in the time of the apostles, were dead languages and known only to scholars. When selections from Holy Writ, therefore, had been read aloud from the rolls reverently kept in the synagogues, the reader translated them into Aramaic, which was the language of the people. Respect for antiquity and fear of alteration preserved the ancient text, even when the people in general had ceased to understand the language in which it was written. After the reading of the Sacred Books—a custom retained by the first Christians from the ancient religion—there was an address called "the Word of Consolation"; and this, it seems, St. Barnabas was often invited to deliver. He was admitted by the Holy Ghost into the rank of the apostles; and his noble and winning character is frequently manifested in the Story of the Acts.

Meanwhile "by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people. And they were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch. But of the rest no man durst join himself unto them; but the people magnified And the multitude of men and women who believed in the Lord was more increased." prodigies done by the apostles became greater, "insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that when Peter came, his shadow, at the least might overshadow any of them, and they might be delivered from their infirmities. And there came also together to Jerusalem a multitude out of the neighboring cities, bringing sick persons, and such as were troubled with unclean spirits; who were all healed." Then the Sadducean rulers were filled with fury. They adopted an unworthy procedure often employed to dishonor a great cause: they thrust the apostles into the common prison. "But an angel of the Lord by night opening the doors of the prison, and leading them out, said: Go, and standing speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life." The expression is striking: the fundamental concept of Christianity is that of the life of Christ communicated to us. With undaunted courage the apostles enter the temple early in the morning; and teach, probably in large measure by conversation, all who gather to hear them. They remain still, no doubt, on Solomon's Porch, where pagan and believer may come.

The high priest, and the council, "and all the ancients of the children of Israel," were equally zealous in their evil way. Early they gather, but receive the incredible news that the well-guarded prison was found vacant. But a messenger from the temple comes at the moment to tell that their prisoners are teaching their doctrine to the multitude. "Then went the officer with the ministers and brought them without violence; for they feared the people, lest they should be stoned." To such a degree of popularity had the apostles attained: besides, they were not revolutionaries; no violence was needed. The high priest recognizes this, as his manner shows. "They have filled Jerusalem with their doctrine"—clearly his word is true. And as for "bringing the blood of this man"—they will never name Him -"upon us," it was what they had called down upon themselves and their children on the day of the Crucifixion. "But Peter and the apostles answering, said: We ought to obey God rather than men." All the doctrine of spiritual independence is in that word of the Prince of the Apostles. The Church will never cease to repeat it. The religion of Christ will never become a department of State. No human ruler will ever have the right to choose the ministers of God. No human law can annul a sacrament. No power of man can ever fetter the Gospel. St. Augustine says that this inflexible constancy of the apostles is, everything considered, more extraordinary than all their signs and wonders.

The lofty and fearless proclamation that the crucified Nazarene is exalted by God to be Prince and Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins, cut the murderous clique to the heart; and they thought of doing a thing of which they were quite capable; namely, of putting the apostles to death. Then arose Gamaliel, their most authoritative rabbi, grandson of the famous Hillel, and considered to have been the son of holy Simeon, who prophesied with joy when the Infant Saviour was brought to the temple. He was the teacher of St. Paul, St. Stephen, and St. Barnabas; and may have had, as has been supposed, Christian sentiments. He counseled moderation in a speech that is strange to our ears, especially when we recall the malevo-

lent fury of the council. He contemplates the possibility that this new way is from God and can not be overthrown; "and they consented to him." It was, probably, the most prudent thing to do in view of the temper of the people, so deeply impressed by the power of the apostles, by the excellence of life of the Christians, and by their exact observance of the Law of Moses. The people were not likely to be conciliated by another judicial murder. The venerable teacher Gamaliel saved the lives of the apostles. According to ancient tradition and history, he became a Christian; and he is venerated in the Martyrology on August 3. We are told that he is represented in the Talmud as living and dying a faithful Pharisee. But the Talmud is not history. It was written long after the days of Gamaliel, and would not easily admit that the leading rabbi became a Christian. Besides, Gamaliel, a man of peace, probably lived on good terms with his Jewish neighbors; and, like all the Christians of Jerusalem, differed but little from them in his observance of the Law. Moreover, the close of his life was in the days of turmoil. when city and Sanhedrin were destroyed.

In the discourse of Gamaliel an apparent contradiction with the historian Josephus has been noticed in the statement regarding Theudas. The revolt of one of that name is put by Josephus about twelve years after the date of Gamaliel's

discourse. The only argument for the alleged contradiction is the similarity of name. But it is a weak argument. A moment's comparison of the words of Gamaliel and of Josephus shows that they refer to two different persons and events. The Theudas of Gamaliel, several years before, was joined in revolt by 400 men. He was slain, and they were dispersed. The Theudas of Josephus led out a multitude of insurrectionists as far as the Jordan. A great number of them were slain by the cavalry of Fadus, the procurator; and many more were made prisoners. Amongst them was Theudas himself, who, when the movement appeared to have spent itself, was beheaded. How little can be concluded from mere identity of name is seen from this, that from the death of Herod the Great to the destruction of the temple, a time of almost continual revolt, there were three leaders of seditions bearing the name of Judas; five that of Simon. The Judas mentioned by Gamaliel revolted in Galilee on the occasion of the census of Quirinus. He is called by Josephus a Gaulonite, because born bevond the Jordan and Lake of Genesareth.

Before being set free, the apostles were cruelly scourged. The unjust punishment consisted of thirty-nine lashes, inflicted with full strength with a six-parted scourge of leather. The prisoners were stripped to the waist, and bound by the hands to a stone. Thus bent under the exe-

cutioner, they were scourged on the breast and shoulders. The heroic apostles remember the outrage and shame endured by their Master; and although forbidden to preach, "they went from the presence of the council rejoicing that they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus. And every day they ceased not in the temple and from house to house to teach and preach Christ Jesus."

#### CHAPTER IV

### THE DEACONS AND THEIR WORK

## I.— THEIR INSTITUTION (Acts vi. 1-7.)

EVENTS moved quickly for the infant Church. The singular piety and union of its members, their most exact observance of the Law, their enthusiastic and invincible faith and testimony, and the astonishing gifts showered upon them by Heaven, won the hearts of the multitude, and the converts rapidly increased. It was all astounding in this city of Jerusalem. Although among the faithful there were "devout men out of many nations under heaven," the leaders were, naturally, Aramaic-speaking Jews of Palestine; and to these the needs of the poor of their own manner of speech and of the city of Jerusalem would be better known. So it happened that "there arose a murmuring of the Greeks against the Hebrews, for that their widows were neglected in the daily ministration." They were all equally Hebrews in reality, although some are called Greeks. These latter are called in the Greek text, "Hellenists"; by which name, in the

New Testament, is meant Jews of the Dispersion, born in foreign lands, and speaking Greek; or, perhaps we should say, a slightly modified dialect of the Greek which included Hebraisms. This is the Greek of the Septuagint version of the Hebrew Scriptures, as well as of our New Testament. Of these Hellenists a word of explanation is needed presently.

The position of widows amongst the Jews was noteworthy. The law benevolently provided for their desolate condition, which was still further alleviated by alms from the temple treasury. The Christian community observed the same charitable custom and prescription. The Greek word for "ministration" in the above-cited verse is "diakonia," which means a ministry, a serving; a deaconship, in fact, in a wide sense. From this it is inferred that the Hellenist widows were not only forgotten to some extent in the distribution of things, but also in the appointment to charitable offices reserved for persons of their Furthermore, in the words of the apostles, "It is not reason that we should leave the word of God and serve tables"; "to serve tables" may mean, from the Greek, "to administer property"; so that there would be question, not only of distribution of food and other needed assistance, but of the general temporal administration of the Christian community. They, therefore, propose to the brethren, "Look ye out among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business." The apostles wished to be unencumbered for their purely spiritual ministry. This meant chiefly preaching —" the ministry of the word." There is no mention even of Baptism, nor of the administration of the Blessed Eucharist. In fact, this latter sacred office was included in the "serving tables"; for the faithful all partook daily of the Body of Christ at the beginning of the "agape" or love-feast. In his Epistles, St. Paul rejoices that he had not baptized any of the contentious Corinthians. Let us note particularly the purpose of the apostles -"But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the word."

The proposal to choose seven men, "full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom," for "serving tables" was a most popular one—"the saying was liked by all the multitude"; and they quickly chose seven men. The chief of all, a man of singular attractiveness—young and beautiful, as the sacred text leads us to suppose and tradition affirms—a man of most extraordinary gifts and qualities, was the protomartyr, St. Stephen; whose name, meaning "a crown," was not without mystery; and who is singled out from the others by the description, "a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost." Next to him was St. Philip, an "evangelist," and ranking with St.

Stephen almost as an apostle: in fact, both outran even the apostles in the sudden and marvelous effervescence of their doctrine and their deeds. The names of all seven are Greek: and it has been supposed, as indeed the early historians affirm, that they were all Hellenists. If so, we see the generous favors of the apostles to the strangers, and the ready acquiescence of the Hebrews of Jerusalem. One of the seven, Nicolas, was a Gentile proselyte from Antioch, the only one not venerated as a saint; and, indeed, accused by some as having caused or occasioned the impure heresy of the Nicolaites; although Clement of Alexandria and St. Augustine absolve him from the charge. St. Prochorus is venerated in the Martyrology on the 9th of April as a martyr at Antioch; St. Nicanor, on January 10, as a martyr in Cyprus; St. Timon, as a preacher through Macedonia and Greece, and a martyr at Corinth, on the 19th of April; St. Parmenas, as a martyr at Philippi, in Macedonia, under Trajan, on January 23.

These seven deacons, chosen, or approved, by the people, were ordained by the apostles in a manner which manifests immediately the sacredness and importance of the office to which they were appointed. It was far more than the distribution of alms, or the administration of temporal things. For such things there was no need of so elaborate a choice and of spiritual gifts so rare and lofty as a condition of ministry. Immediately, too, they are dowered with new and astonishing gifts; and, as we have noticed, outran the apostles in their emphatic proclamation of the equality of Jew and Gentile in the New Law, without the galling and crushing burden of the Old or of Pharisaism. The apostles apparently remain silent observers of the wondrous deeds and speech of St. Stephen; while St. Philip, after baptizing the Ethiopian minister of Queen Candace, and evangelizing the Palestinian coast, converts immediately the very capital of Samaria, with the people of which region no Jew would ever associate.

Not only this, but there was at once an extraordinary multiplication of converts to the Faith: "The word of the Lord increased, and the number of the disciples was multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly " and — strangest of all — "A great multitude also of the priests obeyed the faith." The new outpouring of the Spirit in the institution of deacons, the assiduous prayer of the apostles, the astonishing constancy and power of a new testimony and a new life, were re-awakening, but in unparalleled splendor, "the tender love, inspiring warmth, and illuminating light" of a divine revelation almost lost in Jewish formalism. The deacons were consecrated, with prayer, by the imposition of hands — the essential rite of sacramental ordination - "and

full of grace and fortitude, they did great wonders and signs among the people." Hence it is the common opinion of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church that this was the conferring of the sacrament of Deaconship; and from this illustrious unfolding of the Church's organization, we trace historically the singularly notable and important ministry of deacons in the Christian Church. St. Paul always joins them with the bishops, and demands of them a similar holiness: he institutes them, moreover, in Ephesus, Philippi, and Crete, where there were no common "tables" in the sense in which they existed in Jerusalem: "Deacons in like manner [as the bishop] chaste, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre" (1 Tim. iii. 8); and to the Philippians he writes, "Paul and Timothy, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons." (Phil. i. 1.)

The deacons took charge of the temporal affairs of the Church, provided for the needy, baptized, distributed the Blessed Eucharist in the assemblies of the faithful, preached, and in general assisted the bishops as their direct helpers and ministers. At an early period we find Christian Rome divided into seven deaconries and placed under seven deacons, who soon become archdeacons or cardinal deacons. St. Gregory the Great doubled the number; and thus we have now

fourteen cardinal deacons in the Sacred College which elects the Pope, and with him governs the Church.

The good widows were not quite deprived of their "ministration," but became deaconesses, and filled very important offices, especially regarding the women converts. They were received and dedicated with special formalities: "Let a widow be chosen of no less than threescore years of age, who hath been the wife of one husband, having testimony for her good works, if she have brought up children, if she have received to harbor, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have ministered to them that suffer tribulation, if she have diligently followed every good work." (1 Tim. v. 9–10.) What wonder there were so many saints in those days!

## II.—THE HELLENISTS

What became of the twelve tribes of Israel carried away into captivity in Assyria and Babylon? The answer to the question is sometimes forgotten. They gradually lost the dream of the earthly pre-eminence of Israel; ceased to hang their silent and mourning harps on the willows of the Euphrates, and even to sing the songs of Sion in an alien land, for they understood only the tongue of the stranger. Taking the advice of their prophets, they made homes in the lands in

which they dwelt; and, freed from the now impossible shackles of the Levitical Law, turned their minds from their primitive agriculture to trade with the Gentile, in which they have ever since notably excelled. They prayed, too, as their prophets told them, for the nations of their exile; and by their religion and virtues made an extraordinary impression on the darkened minds of heathendom. For they remained immovably faithful to the One God of their fathers, and to the essential things of His Law; and, indeed, not less strangely, to the memories and customs of Sion, with which they ever remained in loyal communication.

Favored by their conquerors, they became wealthy and often powerful; allured by commerce, they passed to every known land under the sun - from India to Spain, from the northern limits of the Roman Empire to the heart of Africa. Alexander the Great was their special friend, and his Egyptian city of Alexandria became their most distinguished metropolis. Here they dedicated themselves to the literature of the Greeks, produced the Septuagint Greek version of their Scriptures, and endeavored to interpret their history and the teaching of Jehovah in the myths of the Greeks. It is thought that in the century after Our Lord, they numbered a million in Egypt; that is, perhaps one-eighth of the entire population. Not a port, not an important city, in Asia Minor, Macedonia, or Greece, lacked its synagogue and Jewish community.

Their staunch faith in One Supreme Divine Spirit, their lofty morality, their many virtues, especially their religion and charity, won many proselytes and still more friends. Women, especially, more tender and more pure, were drawn from the baseness of paganism. It was said that nearly all the women of Damascus were Jewish proselytes; and the remark of the poet Ovid was, that, if any one wished to see the fairest and noblest faces of Rome, he should take his station at the entrance of the Hebrew synagogues.

The Jews of the Dispersion, or Diaspora, or Hellenists, as they were called, whose views of their religion were enlarged and liberalized by being set free from Levitical practices, to them impossible, and by their constant inter-dwelling with other races, many of which were far more cultured than themselves, were lenient with their converts, often demanding little more than belief in One, Invisible, All-Good God. And so in "every nation under heaven," the twelve tribes kept multiplying for perhaps five centuries; forming thus one of the great and astonishing world-movements, designed by God as a preparation for the Gospel. For to them everywhere was the Heavenly Message first sent; and nearly everywhere some accepted; but many more of the Jewish proselytes than of the Jews themselves. These scattered Jews never forgot Jerusalem or its temple, or the needs of its people. Every year pilgrims through the streets of the Holy City, bearing abundant offerings. And at least once in his life every exiled son of Israel aspired to have offered in the temple of his fathers the sacrifices of the Law.

# III.—ST. STEPHEN (Acts vi. 8 — vii. 59.)

In those early days of heavenly favors, arose in the Church the extraordinary figure of St. Stephen, one of the most beautiful and admirable in all the history of Christianity. According to the older chroniclers it was in the year 34; the same, they say, in which St. Peter appointed the apostle St. James the Less bishop of Jerusalem. According to the later critics, it is supposed to have been in 37. Nearly all that we know of the great deacon is contained in one chapter and a half of the Acts; and by far the greater part of this record is taken up by his discourse before the council of the high priest. It is a brief but glorious page, the beginning of those inspiring Acts of the Martyrs which continued to be written during the succeeding centuries. Nothing could be more condensed and intense than the praise of the Sacred Text for this heroic leader of all the martyrs after Jesus Christ-"A man full of

faith and the Holy Ghost"; "Stephen, full of grace and fortitude, did great wonders and signs among the people"; those of the synagogues "were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit that spoke"; "and all that sat in the Council, looking on him, saw his face as if it had been the face of an angel." His fearless and peerless eloquence, his irresistible attacks on the various synagogues, his vehement denunciation of the murderous Sanhedrin, which held his life in its hand, his supreme charity in his awful death, have made St. Stephen one of the most noble examples in all the annals of the Christian ages. We have just one short view of this wonderful life, one speech on his last day. But on that day his work was done. He proclaimed the triumph of Christianity, the condemnation of Pharisaism, and the abolition of their ceremonial law. Their temple would no longer circumscribe the worship of God, nor their race be any longer the chosen people of God. This it was that cost him his life. But his example, his discourse, and his martyrdom won St. Paul, whom he himself gave promise of surpassing. The speech and writing of the Apostle of the Gentiles frequently recall the words and thoughts of this last sermon of St. Stephen. He follows with like hardihood the decisive controversial method of the martyred deacon. He employs constantly a similar line of argument in his disputation with the Jews. And

the most remorseful memory of St. Paul until the close of his life is the part he took in the bloody tragedy which silenced the eloquent tongue of St. Stephen. It is conjectured, and with great probability, that St. Luke obtained from St. Paul the striking details of the trial of the protomartyr, for St. Paul seems from his own words to have taken part in the council. There was an official account of the trial written by secretaries, and this, St. Paul, as one of the judges, would naturally have given to St. Luke. Hence the intensely personal and oriental tone of St. Stephen's address, and its unusual length as reported in the Acts. Here we find, not the words of a Hebrew of Jerusalem, but of a Hellenist, who quotes the Scriptures always in the Greek version of the Septuagint, a language understood also in Jerusalem. He is accused by Hellenists of the synagogues, amongst whom he was accustomed to dispute - therefore, in their native tongue. Moreover, his whole defense before the council is more natural to a freer and broader-viewed Hellenist than to a Hebrew of Pharisaic tradition.

St. Stephen shows, however, a most intimate knowledge of Our Lord. He condemns in almost the words of his Master the destructive excesses of the oral law. He reproves the Jews similarly in the same manner as Our Saviour. He recognizes Him ecstatically at once when he sees Him in the opened heaven. And in the dreadful death

scene, the memory of Calvary fills the whole mind of the martyr, who dies imitating exactly the example and repeating the selfsame words of the Crucified. This is an additional reason for supposing that he was one of the seventy-two disciples.

St. Paul appears as the most extreme of all in the condemnation and death of St. Stephen. Was it because he was, as many suppose, a relative of him whom he regarded as an apostate; and a special and vanquished opponent in the synagogue of the Cilicians to which both are said to have belonged?

The death of the emperor Tiberius, and the withdrawal of the legate Vitellius from Jerusalem, gave the Sanhedrin an opportunity of usurping the power of life and death, of which the Romans had deprived it. Unable to refute St. Stephen, who was far more clever than themselves, his foes take the shorter way of violence and murder. Those that he provoked directly were the foreign-born Jews, who had nearly 500 synagogues in Jerusalem. Of these, the most turbulent were from proconsular Asia and Cilicia. The Libertines — a Latin name retained - were freedmen, descendants of the enslaved Jews sent to Italy by Pompey, the conqueror of Palestine. The accusation and the manner of preferring it were the same as employed against Our Lord. They set up perjured witnesses; who, however, strangely enough, appear to agree in their charge that St. Stephen, "this man ceaseth not to speak words against this holy place and the Law," "words of blasphemy against Moses and against God." "Ceaseth not"—he made, they say, continual harangues. Their speech -"this holy place"—shows the council had assembled in the well-known hall facing the Holy Place, which had been interdicted to them by the Romans, because it could not be overlooked by the soldiers of the Prætorium. To speak of the destruction of their everlasting temple, "the joy of all the earth"; of the abrogation of their Law, so absurdly changed by their "traditions"; of the exaltation of the crucified Nazarene over Moses, the legislator of the people of God; of the fruitlessness of their carnal sign of circumcision, which for them took the place of interior justice - this was in their ears blasphemy indeed. "They stirred up the people, and the ancients, and the scribes; and running together, they took him and brought him to the council."

The last tremendous drama had begun: "And all that sat in the council, looking on him, saw his face as if it had been the face of an angel." This should have recalled the heavenly splendor on the face of Moses, the only one in their history of whom such a thing is recorded. "Then the high priest"—apparently overawed—"said: Are these things so?" They were not true. The

denunciations of St. Stephen, as those of Our Lord, were but the words of their own prophets: and neither had said that Jesus would destroy the temple and the city; but that such would be the vengeful deed of the Roman invader. St. Stephen does not answer directly; but, as was his wont in their synagogues, with zeal, and not without tenderness, he unfolds their prophetic history, emphasizes their constant infidelities, recalls their clear prophecies of the Messias, insinuating in a masterly manner that the Promise and the Law were given outside the Holy Land, and not in virtue of circumcision, that the worship of God was not and could not be confined to a temple made with hands. There was evidently no retractation of the great deacon's teaching in their synagogues; and seeing the darkening faces of his violent audience, and the hopelessness of persuasion, he reproaches them with a sternness that we can hardly realize, branding them as "the betravers and murderers of the Just One." "They were cut to the heart, and they gnashed with their teeth at him." Suddenly he is rapt into ecstasy; sees, in their presence, the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, as Our Lord foretold He would be seen; and gives Him the dear name, "Son of man," the very word of Our Lord, and the name never given by any other but by Himself. All this extraordinary scene only fans into hotter flame the fury

of the Jews: "They, crying out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and with one accord ran violently upon him."

"And casting him forth without the city, they stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man whose name was Saul. And they stoned Stephen, invoking and saving: Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." The Christian heart will follow in tender pity that Wav of Sorrow along which the lonely martyr was cast or dragged, and the cruel, awful death by stoning at the hands of the enraged multitude. The witnesses, whom the Law commanded to throw the first stone, lay their outer garments at the feet of the vet unconverted St. Paul, who is clearly the leader of the executioners, as he was one of those who "readily approved" of the condemnation. It is most touching and impressive to note that St. Stephen, who prayed for himself standing, falls on his knees and cries with a loud voice for pardon for his murderers, so heartfelt is his compassion for them, and his zeal for their salvation. Such a prayer could not remain unanswered; and attention is immediately directed to St. Paul by St. Luke, as if to point out the great spirit, who, won by the blood of the first of the martyrs, took up his message, and made it resound through all the Roman Empire, and through all the ages yet to come.

St. Stephen, crushed and broken, sank down on the blood-sodden ground, "and fell asleep in the Lord"—a figure of speech to the classical Greek and Roman; to the Christian henceforth forevermore the expression of a supreme and all-satisfying dogma of faith and hope.

The shortest way "to cast St. Stephen forth without the city" certainly was by the steep line of steps which led from the vicinity of the temple down to the valley of the Cedron, or of Josaphat. This stairway was near what is now called St. Stephen's Gate, and, by the Arabs, the Gate of the Lady Mary (Our Lady). At the foot of the steps, nearly opposite Gethsemani, is the place venerated by Christians of both the East and West as the scene of the martyrdom of St. Stephen. It would be hard to see why the infuriated Jews should take the martyr across the whole city, and a considerable distance beyond what is now called the Damascus Gate, or perhaps the Gate of Herod, to the east of it, to the site of the basilica of St. Stephen, built here by the Greek empress Eudoxia.

In the discourse of St. Stephen before the Sanhedrin there are several antilogies, as they are called — curious apparent contradictions with other statements of Holy Writ. But these, or at least most of them, are not very difficult to reconcile, without admitting, as some do, that St. Stephen, who was "full of the Holy Ghost and

wisdom," made mistakes regarding his facts. ch. vii. 2-4, St. Stephen includes Chaldea in Mesopotamia; that is, all the region beyond the Euphrates: this was usually done. He says that God spoke to Abraham before he left Chaldea, and before his father's death, therefore; but in Genesis xii., the apparition occurred in Haran, and after the death of Thare. There is question clearly of a twofold vision, as is supposed in Genesis xi. 31 and xv. 7. The buying of a place of sepulture (Gen. xxiii.) does not contradict the statement (Acts vii. 5) that God gave not a foot of land gratuitously to Abraham in Palestine. In Acts vii. 6, there is question of an exile of 400 years; which, according to Exodus xii. 40, is exactly 430 years; but in the former text there is question of a "bondage"; in the latter, of an "abode," including the happy days of Joseph. In verse 14, St. Stephen says Joseph called to him in Egypt his father and all his kindred, seventy-five souls. This number includes kindred born in Egypt, to whom reference is made in Numbers xxvi. and 1 Paral. vii.; whereas, in Genesis xlvi. 26-27, all that went with Jacob into Egypt were sixty-six; to whom, if we add Jacob himself, Joseph and his two sons, "all the souls of the house of Jacob that entered Egypt were seventy." St. Stephen, as a matter of fact, follows the Septuagint; and here we find five names of the sons and grandsons of Joseph. This does

not. however, quite remove the difficulty concerning the varying text of the Hebrew and the Septuagint, and differences between Genesis and other parts of the Sacred Text, and, in fact, concerning Genesis itself. So that it has been supposed that the numbers seventy and seventy-five of the family of Jacob are not the original numbers of the Scriptures, but numbers afterward varied; and so St. Stephen merely cites the Septuagint as a text admitted by his hearers. much more involved question is that of Acts vii. 16, where we are told that the bones of the patriarchs who died in Egypt were transferred to Sichem, and laid in the sepulcher which Abraham bought of the sons of Hemor, the son of Sichem. In Genesis l. 13, we learn that Jacob was buried near Mambre (in Hebron), in the double cave which Abraham had bought of Ephron the Hethite. After all, there is no contradiction: the twelve patriarchs were buried in Sichem; and, possibly, Jacob, or all, were later transferred to Hebron. St. Augustine hands down this tradition of the twelve patriarchs. In Genesis xxxiii. 19, it is said that Jacob, perhaps 117 years afterward, bought, near Salem, not far from Sichem, a field from Hemor, the father of Sichem. This would be, clearly, a different Hemor. It is objected that the town of Sichem was not yet called by that name in the days of Abraham. In Genesis xii. 6, it is called Sichem, however, in the days of Abraham. It may have been founded by Hemor and named in honor of his son. Some writers, supposing that St. Stephen refers to the cave at Hebron, believe that Seor, the father of Ephron, had a second name, Hemor, which may well have been the case.

# IV.—ST. PHILIP (Acts viii. 1–40.)

After the death of St. Stephen arose his great companion St. Philip. Nothing could show better the power of the new spirit than his fearless evangelization of the hostile land, his conversion of the Gentiles, and their admission into the Church on an equal footing with the Jews. It was the sudden and glowing bloom of a rich spiritual spring.

The disciples were driven out of Jerusalem into many and distant places by the violence of the persecution which raged after the death of the protomartyr. They had but little time to mourn, as they bitterly did, over the loss of Stephen. Saul, the yet unconverted St. Paul, still the leader, ravaged the Church. He tore his victims from their homes, going with his armed band from house to house; and many were slain — how many we know not. The ancient chroniclers put the number at 2,000. St. Paul himself says in Acts xxvi. 10, "Many of the saints did I shut up



SAUL WITNESSING THE STONING OF STEPHEN From the painting by N. H. J. Westlake



in prison . . . and when they were put to death I brought the sentence. And oftentimes punishing them in every synagogue, I compelled them to blaspheme; and being yet more mad against them, I persecuted them even unto foreign cities."

The apostles remained heroically with their flock in Jerusalem, or chiefly there or in the neighborhood. But a great multitude was dispersed everywhere, first through Judea and Samaria, then (xi. 19) "as far as Phenicia, and Cyprus, and Antioch." They must have been numerous and active in Damascus, since Saul hastened thither to persecute them. Soon we find the apostles journeying in Palestine to visit and confirm the brethren; and, soon after, we find them traversing the world. "They were all dispersed . . . except the apostles," says St. Luke: therefore, the men, women, and children went away. But, with a spirit almost impossible for us to realize, they "went about preaching the word of God." (viii. 4.) At Antioch, in particular (xi. 21), "a great number, believing, were converted to the Lord"; so that St. Barnabas was sent from Jerusalem; and seeing, he was transported with gladness: "and he exhorted them all with purpose of heart to continue in the Lord, for he was a good man and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith. And a great multitude was added to the Lord." (xi. 23-24.) What an astonishing story!

The deacon St. Philip, driven from Jerusalem, was immediately attracted by the fame of Samaria, the idolatrous capital of revolted Israel. It was little more than a day's journey northward, and then in the height of its splendor, having been embellished extraordinarily by citybuilding Herod the Great. To-day, on its desolate hill-site, "the crown of pride," nothing remains but the long rows of broken columns which still bear witness to the departed grandeur of Sebaste (Augusta). This was the Greek name given to it by Herod in honor of the Roman emperor; to the popular and characteristic Roman worship of whom Herod built also a temple.

Samaria had supplanted the ancient capital, Sichem, northwest of which it stood, at a distance of six or eight miles. Our Lord had pointed out this region as "white already to harvest" (John iv. 35), on that wonderful day when He revealed Himself so plainly to the Samaritan woman at the well of Jacob. "Of that city many of the Samaritans believed in Him for the word of the woman giving testimony. . . . And He abode there two days, and many more believed in Him because of His own word." It was then that Our Lord said that neither on Mount Garizim of the Samaritans, nor in Jerusalem of the Jews, would God be adored as in His only approved sanctuary; but He would be adored in spirit and in truth everywhere. These memories of Sichem and Samaria turned hitherward the footsteps of St. Philip into the heart of the Samaritan country. It was a land which knew God and had the Law of Moses, and which was expecting the Messias. It was time then, since Jerusalem was consummating its apostasy, to turn to other sheep not of the fold.

The response to the preaching of St. Philip was immediate and general, notwithstanding the bewitching seduction of Simon Magus. people with one accord were attentive to those things which were said by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For many of them who had unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, went out. And many, taken with the palsy, and that were lame, were healed. There was, therefore, great joy in that city. . . . But when they had believed Philip preaching of the kingdom of God, in the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." (viii. 6-12.) Then also Simon Magus believed, or at least pretended to do so. He was baptized and adhered to Philip. But this first of heretics and heresiarchs soon began to reveal himself in his true colors. "Being astonished, he wondered to see the signs and exceeding great miracles which were done." And when Saints Peter and John came and gave the Holy Ghost with the power of miracles, the sordid and immoral magician sought to purchase the power of doing likewise. "Keep thy money to thyself, to perish with thee," was the stern rebuke of St. Peter. Simon Magus became more blasphemous and immoral subsequently. His name, clinging to the vice of selling sacred things, will go down in merited shame to the end of time.

The apostles, having confirmed the new believers (for St. Philip was only a deacon), "preached the gospel to many countries of the Samaritans." Thus suddenly and after the long night of centuries, the Christian faith burst into bloom over the whole land.

There is a secular as well as a sacred romance in the memories awakened by the baptism of the powerful treasurer of the queen of Ethiopia. Forbidden by the Jewish Law, on account of his condition, to become a full convert, or proselyte of justice, his faith nevertheless drew him to worship in Jerusalem. As he was returning in his chariot, and reading, according to the rabbis' counsel, the roll of the Sacred Writings, "the Spirit said to Philip: Go near and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip, running thither, heard him reading the prophet Isaias." prophet Isaias had often spoken of the Ethiopians, "a terrible people, after which there is no other." (Isaias xviii. 2.) He had prophesied their chastisement and their conversion. But there may have been another reason for this reading. To the mutilated class to which the Ethi-

opian treasurer belonged, the great prophet of Israel had made in the name of God the most touching promises, and, amongst many, this in particular, "I will make them come up into my holy mountain, and in my house of prayer will I fill them with great joy." (Isaias lvi. 7.) The stranger pilgrim was reading aloud from the famous fifty-third chapter of the prophet, a prophecy evidently and admittedly Messianic, in which, however, the Passion of Our Lord, which was the stumbling-block of the Jews, is described in language truly awful. To St. Philip's question. whether he understood the meaning, the pilgrim answered: "I beseech thee, of whom doth the prophet speak this? Of himself or of some other man? Then Philip, opening his mouth . . . preached unto him Jesus." It was an inflamed discourse, a new revelation. The intensity of the treasurer's faith and ardor is shown in his prayer for immediate baptism. "And as they went on their way, they came to a certain water; and the eunuch said: See, here is water; what doth hinder me from being baptized? And Philip said: If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest. And he answering, said: I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they went down into the water, and he baptized him . . . and he went on his way rejoicing."

Thus, by this extraordinary incident was the

Faith carried literally into the heart of Africa. In ancient literature Ethiopia was an indefinite and mythical region. As geographical knowledge became, however, more complete and exact, the Greeks became acquainted with Ethiopia properly so called, lying beyond Upper Egypt; and themselves and their literature penetrated to its capital, Napata. This was situated near the water, in the wide semicircle made by the Nile in Nubia, between the third and fourth cataracts. In the days of the emperor Augustus, his general Petronius repelled an attack made on the Egyptian frontier by a Queen Candace of Ethiopia; subjugated her territory, and destroyed the capital city. Its site has been discovered where the village of Merawi now stands. To Napata succeeded Meroë, farther south, by the curving Nile, on the rich and level plain, between the tributary streams of the Atbara and the Blue Nile. A party of Roman explorers in the time of Nero found a Queen Candace reigning here, probably the same who is mentioned in the Acts. Candace was a title given to the female rulers of Meroë, as that of Pharao was given to the kings of Egypt.

The infiltration of Hebrew belief and customs into Ethiopia was very remarkable, and endures to our own day. We have no means of knowing for certain to what extent the Christian faith was spread by the royal treasurer. In fact, the

history of the country becomes obscure until its rebirth by conversion to Christianity by the Tyrian Saint Frumentius in the early fourth century. In the sixth, came missionary monks venerated under the name of the Nine Saints. The country followed, unfortunately, the Monophysite heresy of the Copts; but remained Christian through its fight of three centuries against the Mahometans. The only Christian kingdom of Africa that so remained in nationality and faith is that which alone is now properly called Ethiopia, or, more generally, Abyssinia.

We are amazed at the career of St. Philip. "The spirit of the Lord took away Philip, and the eunuch saw him no more. . . . But Philip was found in Azotus; and passing through, he preached the Gospel to all the cities, till he came to Cæsarea." Let us pause to consider what this meant. He passed through the land of ancient Philistia and the rich and busy plain of Sharon, extending between the sea and hills. Azotus was powerful and splendid, a half-pagan city with Roman officials. Here the Ark of the Covenant, taken in battle, had been enclosed by the Philistines in their temple of Dagon. Here. too, were glorious memories of the Machabees. St. Philip preached in all the cities until he came to Cæsarea. About ten miles north of Azotus was Jamnia, then at the height of its glory and prosperity. According to Strago, the province of Jamnia could furnish an army of 40,000 men. Here the Evangelist St. Philip would cross the valley of Sorec, famous for the exploits of Samson. He would pass through ancient Accaron, whose god was Beelzebub, consulted by King The men of Accaron returned the Ark Ochozias. to Israel. Near was Gezer, a strong strategic fortress, later a bishop's see. It had been given by Pharao as a marriage portion to his daughter, the bride of King Solomon. Farther north is Ramleh, or Arimathea, the city of the Sanhedrist councilor, Joseph, the friend of Our Lord. Not far off are Lydda and Joppe, which, in a short time, have Christian communities of such importance that St. Peter visits them. About ten miles northeast of Jaffa (Joppe) stood Antipatris. founded by Herod; and at the same distance, northward on the coast, was Apollonia, rebuilt by the Romans. There were many other towns and villages, especially on the slopes where the hill country rose eastward from the plain. Finally, after having evangelized perhaps nearly half of the coast of Palestine, St. Philip reached Cæsarea, which became his first place of abode, but in which, with perhaps better opportunities, he continued the wonders of his ministry. His house became the center of Christianity, the resting-place of the Christian traveler or pilgrim. Here, at this chief seaport of the country, the seat of the Roman administration, a second capital, St. Philip, with his four daughters, who were prophetesses, comforted, instructed, evangelized the human stream which spread the Faith with a rapidity absolutely marvelous through the lands surrounding the Mediterranean and constituting the cultured and opulent world of Greece and Rome.

#### CHAPTER V

## ST. PAUL, THE VESSEL OF ELECTION

#### I.— VOCATION AND CHARACTER OF ST. PAUL

Northing is more difficult than to write worthily of St. Paul. It would require an en thily of St. Paul. It would require an angelic hand to trace the character of this gigantic soul "asked of God"-for such is the meaning and the significance of his name - of this preeminent "vessel of election," of the consummate teacher of the Gentiles. It would be necessary to meditate long and profoundly on his extraordinary deeds and heaven-lighted words. Of both we have a copious and glowing history. The Apostle of the Nations was providentially provided with a companion, the confidant of his heart and the sharer of his labors, who, with the fidelity of conscience and affection, devotes the greater part of his story to the missions of St. Paul. But it is in the rich and luminous Epistles of the Apostle himself that we shall find the revelation of his mighty heart, of his ineffable philosophy which was Christ, of his virtues raised to

the last degree of dazzling perfection. What mind can grasp, or what pen describe the preaching of "the unsearchable riches of Christ, to enlighten all men that they may see what is the dispensation of the mystery which hath been hidden from eternity in God . . . that the manifold wisdom of God may be made known to the principalities and powers in heavenly places through the Church, according to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus Our Lord"? (Eph. iii. 8-11.) Who can do justice in human words to one who "was caught up into paradise, and heard secret words which it is not granted to man to utter"? (2 Cor. xii. 4.) Who but St. Paul could understand the mystery "in the dispensation of the fulness of times, to re-establish all things in Christ" (Eph. i. 10), "who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature . . . the head of the body, the Church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may hold the primacy"? (Col. i. 15-18.) Such mighty utterances were familiar to the great Apostle: he lived to propose them to those newly converted to the Faith, and they, aided by some heavenly light, understood.

To St. Paul, Christianity was Christ; and to form Christ in human souls was, according to his extraordinary phraseology, the purpose of his ministry. To him, Christ was absolutely all; and he loved Him to such a degree that he could say,

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"I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. ii. 20); "for to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. . . . I am straitened, having a desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ." (Philipp. i. 21-23.) This was no empty affection, for he could say, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world." (Gal. vi. 14.) "For I judged not myself to know anything among you but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." (1 Cor. ii. 2.) "Furthermore I count all things to be but loss for the excellent knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord." (Philipp. iii. 8.) No famous city through which he passed. no historic scene, no literature of cultured paganism, ever attracted St. Paul. He saw Christ everywhere and human souls; to all else he was blind and insensible.

In this wonderful soul we meet contrasts extreme and startling. The "Ambassador of Christ," he considers himself "not worthy to be called an apostle"; but "of sinners, the chief." He is favored with unutterable revelations; but is subjected to the humiliating "sting of the flesh." Asia, Greece, and Rome have heard his mighty voice and obeyed; yet the conquering Apostle was "in presence lowly" and "rude in speech." Loved and hated in equal extremes, never hesitating or losing self-possession in the midst of danger; yet with a constant sense of sor-

row, keenly sensitive to his own natural defects, and fearing to be left alone. He speaks with his Divine Master in visions of heaven, and as a herald proclaims the mysteries and the designs of God; but at the same time he writes minute instructions for old women and widows, and will write an Epistle in favor of a runaway slave. There is no opposition so violent, no danger so imminent, no tribulation so keen, as to make him cease "to become all things to all men that he might save all"; but he is ever "as a little one in the midst of his converts," "as if a nurse should cherish her children": "He is jealous of them with the jealousy of God," lest he lose them; and he calls them his "little children, of whom I am in labor again until Christ is formed in you." (Gal. iv. 19.) "We are fools for Christ's sake." he writes of himself (1 Cor. iv. 10) . . . "we are weak . . . we are without honor. Even unto this hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked and are buffeted, and have no fixed abode; and we labor, working with our own hands: we are reviled and we bless; we are persecuted, and we suffer it: we are blasphemed and we entreat; we are made as the refuse of the world, the offscouring of all even until now." Of readiest and tenderest sympathy; of entire and most constant devotedness; of unwearied and universal solicitude, he revisits again and again those whom he had begotten in the Faith; and identifies himself with his apostolic companions, who become to him as his sons.

Such was the wonderful St. Paul, who set the Gospel free from Jewish trammels, and revealed Christ through the known and cultured world of Asia Minor, Greece, and Rome. Such he was, and much more than any human tongue can say. Yet how deeply has his sacred name been dishonored by the partizan and religious revolutionist! He commends virginity, and proposes himself as the model of it; but to the religious "reformer" he must have been a widower; because, for sooth, he appears to have taken some part for a short time in the judgments of the Sanhedrin. He is held up as the preacher of an "independent Gospel," owning no superior, the propounder of the theory of justification by faith only, without good works, the first great defender of the so-called right of each Christian to interpret Christianity as he pleases, and the lineal head of all the religious revolutionists whose lives were as infamous as their doctrines were destructive, who saturated with blood in civil and international war for two or three hundred years every land into which their "reforms" penetrated. If the career and teaching of St. Paul prove anything, they prove the contrary of this most of all. He never once appears out of harmony with the other apostles either in doctrine or practice save on the trifling occasion when St.

Peter condescended to a Jewish prejudice through what he considered prudence and charity. St. Paul's doctrine is approved by St. Peter, whose esteem and affection for him are never diminished. St. Paul's distinctive manner of disregarding, in favor of Gentile converts, the Levitical prescriptions is sustained by St. Peter and approved by the Jewish Christians of Jerusalem. He was received by the brethren in the Holy City only when admitted by St. Peter. He afterward goes up to Jerusalem, not by independent revelation, but because he is sent, and he invariably submits to the apostles. It is St. Peter that opens the way to the Gentiles, and declares most emphatically that the obligation of observing the Law of Moses has ceased. St. Paul himself repeatedly submits through prudence and charity to the observances of the abrogated Law. How easily are forgotten the great Apostle's frequent denunciations of false teaching; his insistence on "the faithful word" and "sound doctrine"; so that, even if "an angel from heaven preach a gospel to you besides that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema." (Gal. i. 8.)

No one knew better than St. Paul himself how imperfect was his own work. It was but the sowing of the seed. Others would come, and in great numbers, to cultivate the vast field, and gather in the harvest. In Asia Minor, the first great theater of his mission journeys, the founding of churches and the fashioning of the Christian people would be the work chiefly of St. John. In Greece, his companions and converts would develop what he had begun; and with them would labor St. Andrew and others. In the heart of the Roman empire, the deepest and most lasting impression would be that of St. Peter. However luminous and exalted the theology of St. Paul, it would never be so influential as the marvelous organization, all-enduring, all-conquering, and everlasting, which had its source and its center in Peter.

"Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and the dispensers of the mysteries of God: here now it is required among the dispensers, that a man be found faithful." iv. 1-2.) They were all faithful witnesses, not preaching themselves nor their own words, but Christ and His revelations: and Our Blessed Lord Himself was the first and most faithful of witnesses, who testified to men what He had seen in the bosom of the Father.

### II.—ST. PAUL'S CONVERSION (Acts ix. 1-19.)

"After the lips of Stephen had grown silent, soon the trumpet of Paul began to sound." Thus St. Chrysostom voices the general conviction that

the Church owed to the prayer and martyrdom of St. Stephen the herald of the Gospel amidst the nations. The activity of St. Paul in pursuing those of whom he was so soon to become the almost peerless defender must have occupied, it is supposed, several months. He was "as vet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord." He himself speaks to the Galatians (i. 13) of his vehement persecution, his outburst of fury, his persecution beyond measure, his laying waste the Church of God. The words are sadly strong. Many Christians had taken refuge in Damascus amongst the multitude of their fellow Jews. These formed the strongest element in the population, numbering, it is said, some 50,000, and were governed after their own fashion, in obedience to the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem. Damascus, at this time, was under the control of Aretas, king of Petra. He had seized the city under the careless rule of the Roman emperor Caius Caligula, after having beaten thoroughly in battle Herod Antipas, who had divorced King Aretas' daughter, to give her place to the adulterous Herodias, the instigator of the martyrdom of St. John the Baptist. Aretas favored, and probably had to favor, the Jews of Damascus; and thus allowed them to persecute St. Paul. The latter had obtained letters from the high priest to their synagogues, "that if he found any men and women of this (Christian)

way, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem."

Damascus is reached in our day by train from the southern extremity of the Lake of Galilee, or Genesareth. It is a day's journey. The train, leaving the Lake, winds by the steep-banked Yarmouk River - the Hieromax of Pliny. This stream formed the boundary between Gilead, on the south, and the ancient Bashan, on the north. The high Hauran country was on the eastern side of Bashan; and through it the train passes in a northeasterly direction to Damascus. In the days of St. Paul, the journey of about 150 miles from Jerusalem must have taken five days. One of the Roman roads, crossing the Jordan, as the train does, some distance below the Sea of Galilee. followed more or less the direction of the modern railway. Another, crossing at Jericho, took much the same course, farther to the east. As, according to the early Christians, St. Paul was struck down by the heavenly vision to the southeast of the city, he would appear to have followed either of these two roads.

Gilead, which later became Peræa, and the northern part of it Decapolis, was rich in Biblical memories. Here angels appeared to Jacob; and here, at Thisbe, was the native place of the prophet Elias. Hither fled David before Absalom, who met his tragic fate in the forest of Ephraim. The elevated volcanic Hauran was rich and populous in the days of St. Paul. Mace-

donian and Roman rule had studded the country with cities, the ruins of whose temples, theaters, and hippodromes astonish the modern traveler. By the scenes of brilliant victories of Josue and the Machabees would the future apostle pass; by Astaroth of King Og of Bashan, and near it the native place of Job, according to tradition, by ruined subterranean towns of the giants in the deeply riven volcanic soil. All this region, soon to be Christian, would boast of twenty bishoprics for centuries. At last, about eight or ten miles from Damascus, he would cross the Pharphar stream, of which Naaman was so proud, and which still forms the boundary between the district of Damascus and the Hauran country. This delicate line of water, fringed with willows in its belt of verdure, may have been more imposing in the days of the illustrious Syrian general than it is in ours. At present the traveler will scarcely notice that he passes over it, even though he be watching intently for this "river of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel."

The foothills of the Anti-Lebanon mountainrange tower to the height of 4,000 feet over Damascus, the capital of Syria, "the Eye of the East," one of the most ancient cities in the world. It is situated not far from the mouth of a narrow, steep, and most picturesque gorge, down through which pour the pure waters of the Abana; and to this stream the city owes its life. Divided and subdivided in canals, it irrigates and vivifies an oasis of some sixty miles in circumference, within which the city and its gardens occupy a circuit of thirty miles. The oval walls of the ancient town - not one-half of the modern one - are about three miles in circumference. The lower courses of masonry are very old, at least in places, and we have still, on the southeastern side, the gate of St. Paul. Near it stands a tower, the foundations of which are old, and the local tradition would have it that here St. Paul was let down over the walls. Nearly opposite in a cemetery is venerated from ancient days by Christians of the East and West, the tomb of St. George, believed to have been the Abyssinian officer in charge of the gate, who enabled St. Paul to escape, and for which good deed he suffered martrydom. Through the heart of this old walled city still runs east and west the street called Straight, 1,650 yards in length, but not now 100 feet wide as before, yet still retaining traces of its gorgeous double line of Corinthian pillars. Toward the western end is seen from time immemorial the shrine which stands on the site of the house of St. Jude, where St. Paul lodged. And near the wall to the north of the eastern Roman gate at the end of the street is the subterranean chapel of St. Ananias, who is venerated as a martyr of Damascus. There is still, and probably ever since, a Jewish quarter; and it is interesting to

see the people, men, women, and children, working skilfully, though perhaps primitively, at the famous inlaid and enchased work of wood and steel, or at the superb rugs and silks. Nor has a Christian population failed either. At the Council of Nice, in the sixth century, Damascus was represented by its archbishop and seven suffragan bishops. And to-day, in a population of some 300,000 souls, of the 35,000 Christians, the great majority are Catholics, excellently provided with higher and lower schools, Religious Orders of men and women, a cathedral, and several other churches. Nor may we omit the name of the great and scholarly St. John Damascene, whose house still remains and is a much venerated Nor have the martyrs ceased, for in the three days of the indescribable massacre of 1860. six thousand Christians perished.

At about the distance of a mile to the southeast of the city is a Christian cemetery. Here in early days stood a monastery erected in honor of St. Paul, to commemorate the spot where he was struck down by light from heaven.

St. Paul never could forget, and loved to recall, the extraordinary event which changed him from an extreme and persecuting Pharisee into the Apostle of the Gentiles. Three times in the inspired record we have the description of his miraculous conversion—the first is his account as communicated to St. Luke in the ninth

chapter of the Acts; the second occurs in his address (ch. xxii.) to the raging crowd from the steps of the Prætorium when the Roman soldiers had just rescued him from being murdered in the temple; and the third is his story before Agrippa in the twenty-sixth chapter. Naturally enough there is a slight verbal difference, not worth noticing, as the Apostle, recalling, now accentuates one circumstance, now another. It was mid-day, and he was drawing near the city, to be immediately the scene of his unrelenting persecution. Suddenly there burst from heaven a flood of light, enveloping him and all of his companions: "a great light," he calls it in chapter twenty-two; and in chapter twenty-six, "a light from heaven above the brightness of the sun." He was struck to the ground as well as those with him, some of whom soon rose up. He sees the Son of man, who, in order that there may be no mistake, calls Himself Jesus of Nazareth, adding "whom thou persecutest," in order to teach the Apostle the first great lesson, which he enlarged on so much and so frequently afterward; namely, the identification of the Lord Jesus with His followers. St. Paul knew Him not - evidently he had not seen Him in the flesh. The companions hear the voice, but understand no word of the heavenly speech. The words of Our Lord, "It is hard for thee to kick against the goad," seem to show that grace. working through the words, the wonders, and the

martyrdom of St. Stephen and so many others, had already begun to agitate the heart of St. Paul. In his defense before Agrippa at Cæsarea (ch. xxvi.) the Apostle gives at greater length the revelation of the Lord Jesus to him at the moment of his conversion. Possibly this was in part the continuation of Our Lord's words after St. Paul had entered into the city. "I will make thee a minister and a witness of those things which thou hast seen." Many things which he had seen must have made a strange impression on him. Our Lord spoke to him in the Hebrew, or Aramaic. of the time; and it is very noteworthy that St. Paul, even speaking in Greek, repeats always his Hebrew form of his name as Our Lord pronounced it.

"And Paul, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me do?" How many have said that prayer since?

We have at this very moment of the Apostle's surpassing vision and conversion the fact of his subjection to the lawfully appointed authorities in the organized Church. Ananias was in all probability a priest: we may be sure that the many Christians of Damascus were not left without the Blessed Eucharist. To him the convert is sent to be instructed even with regard to baptism; to be baptized; and with baptism, to receive from Ananias his sight and the Holy Ghost. "Saul arose from the ground;

and when his eyes were opened, he saw nothing. But they, leading him by the hand, brought him to Damascus. And he was there three days without sight, and he did neither eat nor drink" - no wonder, after what he had seen and what he had been previously doing against the Christians. But he praved; and while praying, he saw Ananias in vision coming to restore his sight. A kindly act of the dear Master's tenderness it was, so that St. Paul, even though in darkness, would recognize Anarias and know why he came. But Ananias, who knew the terrible Pharisee was coming to destroy the Church, pleaded frankly with the Lord against "this man" and "all the evil he had done." But "the Lord said to him: Go thy way: for this man is to Me a vessel of election, to carry My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him how great things he must suffer for Mv name's sake. And Ananias went his way and entered into the house. And laying his hands upon him, he said: Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus hath sent me, He that appeared to thee in the way as thou camest, that thou mayest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it were scales; and he received his sight; and rising up he was baptized. And when he had taken meat, he was strengthened. And he was with the disciples that were at

Damascus for some days." Ananias held a remarkable position amongst his countrymen in Damascus. Apparently the leading man amongst the Christians, he was highly esteemed by the non-Christian Jews; for, like all the Jewish Christians of Jerusalem, he was a strict observer still of the Law of Moses. He was "a man according to the law, having testimony of all the Jews who dwelt there." His words, as given by St. Paul in his address to the Jews in the temple are longer and more impressive than those given above — "Coming to me and standing by me, he said: Brother Saul, look up. And I the same hour looked upon him. But he said: The God of our fathers hath preordained thee that thou shouldst know His will, and see the Just One, and shouldst hear the voice from His mouth. For thou shalt be His witness to all men, of those things which thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou? Rise up and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, invoking His name" (xxii. 13-16).

### III.—ST. PAUL'S FIRST MINISTRIES (Acts ix. 20-30.)

The date of St. Paul's conversion is variously ascribed to A. D. 35, 36, and 37. This last seems most acceptable to modern critics. It is thought that the Apostle was then about 34 years of age, and just at the middle of the span of human life.

Thus he would have been born at the dawn of Christianity, or of almost the same age as Our Saviour. He had not known the Master, however. He may have been absent in his native Tarsus; or he may have been going "round about the sea and the land to make one proselyte" (Matt. xxiii. 15), as was the way with the scribes and Pharisees.

According to the word of St. Luke, the convert Paul began at once to render his marvelous testimony to the Messiasship of Jesus of Nazareth: "Immediately he preached Jesus in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God. And all that heard him were astonished; and said: Is not this he who persecuted in Jerusalem those that called upon this name, and came hither for that intent that he might carry them bound to the chief priests? But Saul increased much more in strength, and confounded the Jews who dwelt at Damascus, affirming that this is the Christ."

Here comes a break in the record of the Acts—
"And when many days were passed, the Jews consulted together to kill him." The well-known Scriptural expression, "after many days," means, or may mean, a long time. And we gather that at this time St. Paul "went into Arabia, and again returned to Damascus," before he went up to Jerusalem or had seen the apostles (Gal. i. 17). "Immediately I condescended not to flesh and blood," as the Vulgate and our English Cath-

olic version translate, or as the English Protestant version has it, "I conferred not with flesh and blood." "To confer with" is an ordinary meaning of the Greek word; and thus the sense would be that St. Paul consulted no human being, as some of the Fathers interpret the passage. Other commentators, however, differ; but, in any case, we can scarcely conclude from the passage that St. Paul did not even preach to anybody: this seems a contradiction of the word of St. Luke. The impression we should naturally receive from the Acts is that St. Paul left Damascus for some time through prudence or necessity; then probably preached in Arabia, and returned at a calmer and more promising moment. In fact, if we take literally St. Paul's own words in Gal. i. 17-18, he must have spent the three years to which he refers, not in a distant part of Arabia, but in Damascus or its neighborhood. Nor had the name Arabia then its later meaning. It did not signify the Sinaitic peninsula, but a region which reached to the confines of Damascus. All this would sustain the view of many of the older commentators, that St. Paul, during those three vears, preached the Gospel in Bosra, Petra, and other places of the territory of Arabia of that time. A view popularized in our day by writers taken with a peculiar fondness for the Old Testament represents St. Paul as spending the three years remote from all human intercourse on or

near Mt. Sinai. The more one considers the theory and its relation to the character and destiny of St. Paul the more one doubts its plausibility. It would have been more natural or fitting for St. Paul to go into Galilee if it were prudent to do so, or if absolute seclusion were advisable. The Apostle's lifelong struggle was with those who still imposed on the Christian converts the burden of the Law.

However the matter may have been, or however long he remained in Damascus, the time came when the stiff-necked Jews made him leave it. "They consulted together to kill him . . . and they watched the gates also day and night. . . . But the disciples taking him in the night, conveyed him away by the wall, letting him down in a basket."

The three years since his conversion may mean, according to the Jewish use, one whole year, and a portion of two others. The story of his life in Damascus was known to St. Barnabas, and probably to others; but the mass of the faithful in Jerusalem did not yet trust him. "He essayed to join himself" to them — the expression is very touching, especially when we think of the entirely tender and sympathetic heart of the Christian Paul. But large-hearted Barnabas, his former school-companion, took him to the apostles, and told of his marvelous conversion, and "how in Damascus he had dealt confidently in the name of Jesus." He "went to Jerusalem to see Peter" especially, as he says himself (Gal. i. 18). And when warm-hearted Peter introduced him to the brethren, all doubt ceased: "He was with them coming in and going out, and dealing confidently in the name of the Lord," exactly as in Damascus; the Hebrew expression revealing the unrestrained familiarity and confidence of the disciples with their new brother.

Immediately he begins to repair the wrong of his former life in Jerusalem; and with characteristic promptitude and ardor preaches, not " to the Gentiles"—for this expression is not in the Greek text — but to the same Hellenists amongst whom he had heard and opposed St. Stephen. "He disputed with the Greeks" so ardently that "they sought to kill him." The Apostle says he "tarried with him [St. Peter] fifteen days" (Gal. i. 18). They were days of heroic fearlessness, of ardent evangelization, of danger, and popular commotion. The disciples saw that St. Paul must leave; but he did not wish to go, so intensely was he convinced that he could persuade the The Divine Master Himself appeared to him as he was praying in the temple (Acts xxii. 17), and bade him, "Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem, because they will not receive thy testimony concerning Me." But St. Paul pleads that he may stay and repair the injury he had done in the city, repeating over the

grievous story in the bitterness of his sorrow. It is in vain: they will not hear; and Jesus insists, "Go, for unto the Gentiles afar off will I send thee." The Apostle obeyed, and was accompanied by the disciples "down" to Cæsarea. This expression we find used in speaking of the journey from Jerusalem to the chief seaport and the seat of the Roman administration. It was west of Samaria, and much nearer than Cæsarea Philippi, in the north of Palestine; by which place some suppose the Saint passed "into the regions of Syria and Cilicia" (Gal. i. 21). Going by sea, which was the easier and more ordinary way, he would touch at Tyre and Sidon in Palestine, and at Seleucia, the port of Antioch, in Syria. He may have gone some part of the journey on foot, as he loved to do later, for the purpose of preaching to the people. This was not the only time he passed along the coast, or portions of it: and perhaps it was in this first visit that he gained some of the converts whom we find him visiting afterward (Acts xxvii. 3), and to whom the apostles sent their decree issued in the Council of Jerusalem (Acts xv. 23). In verse 41 of this same chapter, we learn that St. Paul, before starting with Silas on his second great mission through Asia Minor, "went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches, commanding them to keep the precepts of the apostles and the ancients."

Whether, after leaving Cæsarea, he visited Antioch or not, we do not know. "The brethren (from Jerusalem) . . . sent him away to Tarsus," his native city, from Cæsarea. Hither St. Barnabas went to see him a considerable time after — how long it is not easy to determine: some suppose it to have been two or three years. It is supposed that St. Paul visited Tarsus again, at the beginning of his second mission journey, when, with Silas, "he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches" (Acts xv. 41). If so, we may suppose, that, on his return thither after his conversion, when sent by the brethren from Cæsarea, he made many converts there and throughout the neighboring country.

Tarsus was a famous and flourishing city in the days of St. Paul and long afterward. It was the metropolis of Cilicia, which became a Roman province when conquered by Pompey. The city was situated on both sides of the swiftly flowing Cydnus, in the midst of a vast and fertile plain, half-way between the sea and the Taurus mountain range, about a four hours' journey from either. It was as famous for its schools as for its commerce, rivaling — and it is said surpassing — those of Athens and Alexandria. Its scholars were employed as tutors in Rome, even in the noble and imperial families. Yet it was a coarse and immoral city, vain in its rhetoric and vainer in its religion. Its Grecianized people, of Semitic

origin, were notorious even in the corrupt province of which it was the mistress; and their worship of Sardan, or Sardanapalus, must not be described. It is said that the words used by St. Paul in describing the motto of pagan life (1 Cor. xv. 32), "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die," were inscribed on their temple under a female representation of their god, there being this slight variation, "Drink, eat, and enjoy: all else is naught." St. Paul's declaration that the Gentiles were delivered up to an unnaturally criminal and reprobate sense, no doubt applied to the people of Tarsus, whom he had under his eyes from childhood. From this defilement the Jews stood aloof. St. Paul was of pure blood, a Hebrew of the Hebrews. All the history and luxury, all the philosophy and literature of the corrupt city, never won his admiration, nor left a trace upon his mind.

A VIEW OF LYDDA, PALESTINE



#### CHAPTER VI

# PEACE AND PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH

## I.—ST. PETER VISITS THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

(Acts ix. 31-43.)

Now the church had peace throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria; and was edified, walking in the fear of the Lord, and was filled with the consolation of the Holy Ghost."

In the Greek text we have the word "churches," that is, the various Christian communities; and for "edified" we have a word the direct meaning of which is "were increased." It is remarkable that Galilee is mentioned now for the first time. It was here precisely that we should have expected the greatest progress, in the scenes so dear and so familiar to our Divine Lord. We read of no special evangelization, as if there had been no need. Many Galilean friends of the Prophet of Nazareth must have been acquainted with the wonders in Jerusalem; and returning, must have quickly spread the Faith in the frank and more responsive hearts of their native province.

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The grateful peace which the infant Church enjoyed after three years of persecution — from A. D. 37 to 40 — is now usually attributed to Caligula's change of policy toward the Jews. The new emperor was the intimate friend of the intriguing Idumean adventurer, Herod Agrippa, the grandson of Herod the Great; and had made him ruler of Cœle-Syria, the fertile plain lying between the double chain of the Lebanon mountains. To this were added the tetrarchies of Philip and Lysanias, to the west and south of Damascus. Besides his respect and favor for the national religion, the descent of Agrippa from Mariamne, the beautiful Machabean princess murdered by her bloodstained husband Herod, had made him popular with the Jews. They rejoiced in the newfound liberty, and abused it by fanatical persecution. Caligula, meanwhile, had made up his mind to become a god — the national deity of the empire - and insisted upon being worshiped. The Jews alone resisted, and to their cost. The mad emperor ordered a colossal statue of himself to be set in the Holy of Holies at Jerusalem; and commanded his legate, the soldierly Petronius, to execute his design. The resistance of the Jews was so touching and so obstinate, that Petronius, seeing the fields uncultivated, promised to intercede for them. This brought down on him a decree for his own execution; which, owing to the slaving of Caligula by the tribune Cassius, was never put in force. The emperor Claudius, the friend of Agrippa, succeeding to the throne, left the Jews in peace.

St. Peter, the universal overseer, visited all the Christian communities, not only in Palestine, but beyond, occupying thus, according to the early church historians, the space of two years. Eusebius and St. Jerome say that during this time he founded the see of Antioch, retaining its direction for some years, until he came to Rome in A. D. 44, as Baronius shows from St. Gregory, St. Damasus, and others. "As he passed through, visiting all, he came to the saints who dwelt at Lydda." Let us notice the name "saints," so commonly given to the first Christians, not simply because of their vocation, but also because of their extraordinary virtue.

Orchard-girt Lydda was near Arimathea (Ramleh), and about twelve miles southeast of Joppe (Jaffa). It was an important and very ancient town; and when religious liberty came with Constantine, it was made a bishop's see. It has still, as it has had from most ancient times, a famous church of the great martyr St. George. At Lydda St. Peter found poor Eneas — whose name is Latinized from the Hebrew or Syriac: "He had kept his bed for eight years, being ill of palsy. And Peter said to him: Eneas, the Lord Jesus healeth thee: arise and make thy bed. And immediately he arose. And all that

dwelt at Lydda and Saron saw him: who were converted to the Lord." An astonishing effect surely. Saron, or Sharon, would appear to have been a locality, or district, rather than a town, in the days of Our Saviour. It was a name given in its stricter acceptation, to the seaside plain between Jaffa and Mt. Carmel. Its beauty was historic: "The wilderness... shall bud forth and blossom: the glory of Libanus is given to it, the beauty of Carmel and Saron" (Is. xxxy. 2).

The disciples at Joppe quickly heard of the presence of St. Peter and of the miracle accomplished; and as their beloved Dorcas, or Tabitha, had just died, they "sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not be slack to come unto them. And Peter, rising up, went with them. Through the fertile country and the age-old orange-groves, which still send fruit to Egypt, they came to the prosperous and fortified town, situated on a steep eminence, or hill. overlooking the sea. A volume would not suffice for the romantic and often tragic story of this Philistine city. Allotted to the tribe of Dan, but never taken until the time of David, it changed masters as the powerful invaders swept along the coast, from the Pharao Thotmes III.. 1600 years before Our Lord, to Napoleon and Ibrahim Pasha in our day. The blood of its inhabitants often cemented its soil; and the massacre of thousands of Christians often occurred within its fateful walls. It became an earldom of the Crusaders, who restored its episcopal see. It witnessed the almost superhuman prowess of the English king Richard; and was strongly and beautifully fortified by St. Louis. Could St. Peter have foreseen that the church dedicated to his name would crown the ancient height through the greater part of the Christian centuries as it does still?

The house of Dorcas, long remembered and venerated, stood in the orange-groves on the Jerusalem side of the city; and not far from it, where the road to Jerusalem leaves the modern town, is even still venerated the place of her burial. Curiously enough, an ancient Jewish cemetery was here discovered in 1863. According to a custom as old as Homer, originating no doubt in respect for human dignity, and perhaps from faith in a future life, the body of the deceased was washed. This had a new meaning for Christians, whose faith founded on the Resurrection, and who remembered the honor with which Providence surrounded the dead body of their Redeemer. The earthly remains of Tabitha were then carried to the quiet and honorable upper chamber. Here, when St. Peter came, "all the widows stood about him weeping, and showing him the coats and garments which Dorcas made them "— which she used to make while she was with them, according to the Greek. How natural and touching the scene! "And they all being put forth, Peter kneeling down prayed, and turning to the body, he said: Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes, and seeing Peter, she sat up. And giving her his hand, he lifted her up. And when he had called the saints and the widows, he presented her alive. And it was made known throughout all Joppe; and many believed in the Lord."

In fact, the impression was so great, that St. Peter determined to stay some time in the city: "and it came to pass that he abode many days in Joppe with one Simon a tanner." Not with the well-to-do Tabitha, whose hospitality he might very naturally expect; but with a namesake, who perhaps besought him, but who, nevertheless, was poor and of a trade despised and deemed unclean by the Jews. His "house was by the seaside"; and, even now, is pointed out the site on the southwest of the town, in or near what is vet the tanners' quarter. On it stands a mosque built on a mass of ruin. Here have been discovered, not long since, portions of an ancient church, proving that the Crusaders kept up the tradition of Theodosius, St. Paul, and St. Jerome.

### II.—ST. PETER'S VISION AND THE BAPTISM OF CORNELIUS

(Acts x. 1 — xi. 18.)

One of the most sacredly dramatic events of this extraordinary time now occurred at Joppe and Cæsarea. A heavenly message came about the same time to St. Peter and to the Roman officer, regarding the admission of the latter and his family into the Church. Nothing could be more clear than Our Lord's teaching that the Gospel was for the whole world; St. Peter himself had proclaimed it. It was clear, too, that the Message was first for the Jews. The prejudices of these were intense, especially regarding the value and necessity of circumcision - the mark of the faithful. What was not at first quite clear to the apostles and the others was the question of not imposing any Mosaic prescription on the convert Gentiles; and a matter more obscure was that of the time in making an absolute break with the synagogue. Prudence evidently put back this for a time. In the case of the Roman Cornelius we have the first great public instance, advanced unmistakably by Heaven itself, that circumcision was no longer of necessity or importance, and that henceforth there was no privilege of Jew over Gentile, but all were one in Christ.

To understand the position of Cornelius we

must know what was the character of the cohort "called Italian" which he commanded. Josephus says there were usually at Cæsarea five cohorts, not of stern Roman legionaries, but of auxiliaries, mostly Syrian. Inscriptions, however, have left the matter certain that there was in Palestine a cohort called the Italian, a manner of expression which leaves it doubtful whether all in it were Italians or not. These auxiliary cohorts were commanded by Roman officers; who had, therefore, carried before them the Roman eagles, deemed by the Jews idolatrous. Cornelius, we may suppose, belonged to the illustrious Roman family, the Gens Cornelia. He was worthy of it. A man of singular uprightness and love of truth, he quickly adopted the Jewish belief in one God and served Him faithfully, having converted his entire household, and some of his soldiers - "a religious man, and fearing God with all his house. giving much alms to the people, and always praying to God. This man saw in a vision manifestly, about the ninth hour of the day [three in the afternoon], an angel of God coming in unto him, and saying to him: Cornelius. And he, beholding him, being seized with fear, said: What is it, Lord? And he said to him: Thy prayers and thy alms are ascended for a memorial in the sight of God. And now send men to Joppe, and call hither one Simon, who is



ST. PETER RESTORES TABITHA TO LIFE From the painting by Le Sueur



surnamed Peter. He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side. He will tell thee what thou must do. And when the angel who spoke to him was departed, he called two of his household servants, and a soldier who feared the Lord, of them that were under him. To whom when he had related all, he sent them to Joppe. And on the next day, whilst they were going on their journey, and drawing nigh to the city, Peter went up to the higher parts of the house to pray, about the sixth hour [noon]. And being hungry he was desirous to taste somewhat. And as they were preparing, there came upon him an ecstasy of mind. And he saw the heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending, as it were a great linen sheet let down by the four corners from heaven to the earth; wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts, and creeping things of the earth, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him: Arise, Peter, kill and eat. But Peter said: Far be it from me; for I never did eat any thing that is common and unclean. And the voice spoke to him again the second time: That which God hath cleansed, do not thou call common. And this was done thrice; and presently the vessel was taken up into heaven. Now, whilst Peter was doubting within himself, what the vision which he had seen should mean, behold the men who were sent from Cornelius, inquiring for Simon's house, stood at the

gate. And when they had called, they asked if Simon who is surnamed Peter, were lodged there. And as Peter was thinking of the vision, the Spirit said to him: Behold three men seek thee. Arise, therefore, get thee down and go with them, doubting nothing, for I have sent them. Then Peter, going down to the men, said: Behold, I am he whom you seek: What is the cause for which you are come?" They then told the vision and message of Cornelius. The day being far spent, St. Peter, disregarding Jewish prejudices, took the messengers in and lodged them for the night. Early next day he arose and set out with them, taking care to have with him six of the brethren from Joppe. He needed them soon after in Jerusalem. The distance from Joppe to Cæsarea is about thirty miles, and takes a day and a half. The Apostle and his companions arrived in the afternoon at three. And peculiarly touching, and characteristic of the centurion, is the reverently formal manner in which he, "having called together his kinsmen and special friends . . . came to meet (St. Peter); and falling at his feet, adored." The Greek word for "adored" is used of outward, and in particular of Oriental. marks or manner of respect of man for man. In this instance, St. Peter, with the humility which we might expect, "lifted (the centurion) up, saving: Arise; I myself also am a man." There is no doubt that Cornelius knew well that the Apos-

tle was a man - he had given very definite directions how to find him. "And talking with him, he went in, and found many that were come together." Immediately St. Peter endeavors to soothe, as we may suppose, the intense and unnatural Jewish prejudices of his six companions, by reminding the little non-Christian assembly "how abominable it is for a man that is a Jew to keep company or to come unto one of another nation." But for himself this prejudice can exist no longer, for "God hath showed to me to call no man common or unclean." Then, in answer to the Apostle's question, Cornelius recounts his vision of an angel, and begs "to hear all things whatsoever are commanded thee (St. Peter) by the Lord." "And Peter, opening his mouth, said: In very deed I perceive that God is not a respecter of persons; but in every nation, he that feareth Him and worketh justice, is acceptable to Him." Then he makes known to them the Redeemer of men, who "is Lord of all"-and therefore God — and sums up the life, death, and resurrection of the Messias. He reminds them, however, that they had already heard of this wonderful story -"You know the word which hath been published through all Judea": and perhaps it was Cornelius' longing for this word that had brought him this singular grace of conversion. St. Peter's address was broken by the sudden descent of the Holv Ghost "on all them that heard the word. And the faithful of the circumcision who came with Peter were astonished, for that the grace of the Holy Ghost was poured out upon the Gentiles also, for they heard them speaking with tongues, and magnifying God." The wonders of Pentecost were renewed, and this before the baptism of these Gentiles. St. Peter had them baptized, apparently by one of his companions; and then, giving all Pharisaic and Levitical traditions to the winds, he tarried with them some days.

"And the apostles and brethren who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision"—whoever they were—"contended with him, saying: Why didst thou go unto men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them?" This last was worst of all! St. Peter's answer and defense was a plain statement of all the wonderful incidents; and "having heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying: God then hath also to the Gentiles given repentance unto life."

The noble and pure-hearted soldier was the first-fruits and standard-bearer of the Gentile converts. In various ancient martyrologies he is honored as a martyr, and is said to have been one of the first bishops of Cæsarea.

# III.— MANY CONVERTS AT ANTIOCH (Acts xi. 19–30.)

Just at this time there was occurring in Antioch, which had become the capital of Svria, a movement of measureless significance for the future of Christianity. The brethren, dispersed from Jerusalem, having reached here, preached the Faith as usual, but at first only to the Jews, as was natural. But other converts, Hellenists originally from Cyprus and Cyrene in North Africa, began to announce the Gospel to the Greeks; that is, as it appears, to the pagans, for the word of God had been already received by Greek proselytes to Judaism, as was the case with Nicolas, one of the seven deacons, who was from Antioch. "And the hand of the Lord was with them (who preached to the Gentiles); and a great number believing were converted to the Lord." It was this direct evangelization of outright pagans that aroused the sensitiveness of the Christians of Jerusalem. Yet they chose as envov to Antioch the large-hearted Hellenist St. Barnabas, of Levitical descent and a Cyprian by birth. "Full of faith and the Holy Ghost," he was astonished and transported with joy; and "Son of Consolation, or Exhortation," as he was, and as his name signified, he continued, as the Greek verb expresses, to encourage and console

them with his words of joyful praise. The word here used is that from which comes the title of the Holy Spirit - Paraclete or Consoler. "And a great multitude was added to the Lord" now, by the powerful exhortations and teachings of St. Barnabas. So rich is the harvest that he thinks at once of his friend, St. Paul. He recalls the Apostle's vocation: "This man is to Me a vessel of election, to carry My name before the Gentiles." He knows St. Paul's character and ideas - his conviction of the abrogation of the Levitical Law, his unflinching courage, his insatiable zeal, his power of speech. The expressions "he went to seek Paul" and "when he had found him" seem to indicate uncertainty as to the exact whereabouts of the Apostle and difficulty in finding him; and from this we seem to be justified in concluding that St. Paul was preaching in various places. Both returned to Antioch: "And they conversed there in the Church a whole year; and they taught a great multitude, so that at Antioch the disciples were first called Christians."

Here we have events of extraordinary consequence: the direct evangelization and conversion of "a great multitude" of pagans, without the imposition of the Jewish Law; St. Paul beginning in a definite and marvelous manner his destined ministry amongst the Gentiles; the clear, decisive separation between the ancient

Law and the universal Gospel; a multitude of converts so great and so distinct that the populous city of Antioch knew them as Christians and called them by this name.

The name very probably originated with the governor of the province, for it is a Latinized form, and the Roman official noted carefully the introduction of a new religion. It certainly was not given by the Jews; they would not pronounce the name of Our Lord, still less give Him the title of Messias. Nor did the Christians themselves use it, even afterward. We find it only here in the Acts given historically; again employed by Agrippa in answer to St. Paul (Acts xxvi. 28); and lastly in the Epistle of St. Peter, who bids the faithful not to be ashamed of it (1 Peter iv. 16). All this shows that the glorious name originated probably in contempt, or a mixture of mockery and wit for which the people of Antioch were noted. In their thoughtless pagan dulness, they do not seem to have caught the name correctly. They gave Our Lord the name "Chrestos," and Latin "Chrestus," which to them had a meaning, perhaps an ironical one; namely, "excellent"; whereas the true title, "Christ," the Anointed, would mean nothing. It is perhaps curious that they did not give the name "Jesuits," instead of "Christians," for the dear name of Jesus was constantly on Christian lips, while the title, "Christ," was rare. Christians themselves always preferred the sweet names endeared by charity and intensified by affliction, or consecrated by death —" the saints," "the disciples," "the Church," etc. The name, however, thus imposed upon them, made them realize the distinction of their Faith, and their bond with their great Chief. Soon it became the watchword and the holily proud confession of the Martyrs —" Christianus sum," "I am a Christian!" And for all the world as well, since it comprises and embalms all that is tenderest, noblest, most constant, and most self-sacrificing in the hearts and in the lives of men.

Antioch became rapidly the metropolis of Christendom, and continued such until overshadowed by Rome. For centuries it was the great missionary and governing center in the East, the home of great bishops, saints, and teachers—St. Ignatius, St. John Chrysostom, the two Saints Simeon (Stylites), etc. In the early fourth century it was mostly Christian; later, for 170 years, it was in the hands of the Crusaders; and even now, in its decay, it is the see of the three Catholic patriarchs of the Maronites, Melchites, and Syrians.

Nothing could have shown better the beneficent and watchful Providence of God than the triumph of Christianity in Antioch. Jerusalem was about to perish, and even its Christians still



AN ANCIENT WALL IN SYRIAN ANTIOCH Built across a deep ravine to hold back water for irrigation



clung to Judaic observances. The Seleucid and Roman capital of Syria was the gateway between the East and West, and in particular between Asia Minor and Syria. Its people, though corrupt, were ready for better things. Its cosmopolitan character, its Greek speech and Syro-Greek quickness of wit, made it a favorable field for the ardent hearts and earnest tongues and heavenly endowments of St. Paul, St. Barnabas, and their fellow-workers.

From this great movement at Antioch, as described in the Acts, we notice the absence of St. Peter. Hence the suspicions at Jerusalem and the silence of the sacred record. No intelligent historian doubts the testimony of St. Jerome, confirmed by all Roman annals, and the testimony of the entire Eastern half of Christianity, that St. Peter, having founded the church of Antioch, went to Rome. The metropolitan and patriarchal dignity of the see of Antioch could hardly be explained on any other theory, and, in fact, is not explained. Finally, it is interesting to note that the name "Catholic" seems to have originated also in Antioch, for we find it first in the letters of the martyr St. Ignatius, the second successor of St. Peter in that metropolitan see.

"And in those days there came prophets from Jerusalem to Antioch: and one of them, named Agabus, rising up, signified by the Spirit that there should be a great famine over the whole world, which came to pass under Claudius. And the disciples, every man according to his ability, purposed to send relief to the brethren who dwelt in Judea; which also they did, sending it to the ancients, by the hands of Barnabas and Saul."

Several interesting things are abridged or alluded to in these closing words of the eleventh chapter of the Acts. The touching and affectionate charity of the apostles inspired them to appeal everywhere to their Gentile converts for the relief of the poorer brethren in Jerusalem. The absolute and heroic devotedness of the latter deserved such zeal. They had first, in their ardent pursuit of perfection, renounced all private property. Then, in the unrelenting persecution of the Jews, even their common fund and means of support had failed them. Now, the famine announced by Agabus had probably begun already to be felt in Judea. The appeal to the Antiochian converts must have been very earnest, and their response generous, since every one, according to his means, sent relief. The name of the prophet Agabus is met again in Acts xxi. 10. Here it is said that he came down from Jerusalem to Cæsarea; and taking St. Paul's girdle. bound his own hands and feet, saying that thus the Apostle would be bound in Jerusalem, and handed over to the Gentiles. He is venerated as a saint in the Roman Martyrology on February 13.

The question of the "elders" to whom the alms was sent is very interesting. In Greek the name is "presbyteroi," or presbyters; and is here met for the first time in the New Testament. It is applied at times to bishops, again to priests, and possibly to older men in general. But usually the word is employed with regard to a governing class in the Christian Church, which suggests at once a corresponding body amongst the Jews. It can not be restricted to the bishops; for we find inferior ministers appointed everywhere by the apostles; and when St. James bids the priests be called to administer Extreme Unction to the sick, he can not mean bishops, of whom there was but one in each city. So in other places there is clearly question of priests strictly so-called, as, for instance, in 1 Tim. v. 17-19 —"Let the priests that rule well be esteemed worthy of double honors," etc. As a matter of history, the ruling class in the Christian Church was always the priesthood strictly so called, and under the bishops.

Nothing could better illustrate the harmony between the Hebrew Christians of Jerusalem and the Gentile converts than the sending to the Holy City of the chief instruments of their conversion, Saints Barnabas and Paul, the latter apparently in a subordinate position.

#### CHAPTER VII

### HEROD'S PERSECUTION AND DEATH

### I.— HEROD AGRIPPA

THERE are three kings named Herod mentioned in the New Testament: Herod the Great, who massacred the Holy Innocents; Herod Antipas, his son, who murdered St. John the Baptist and mocked Our Lord in His Passion; and Herod Agrippa, who murdered St. James and imprisoned St. Peter. There are three other rulers of the house of Herod, and bearing this name, one of whom was a kinglet for a time, but they are not called Herod in the Sacred Text. The family of Herod was Idumean, not Jewish. It obtained sway over the Holy Land after the Roman conquest under Pompey; thus fulfilling the prophecy of Jacob, that the Messias would come when the scepter had passed from Juda. The founder of the Herodian dynasty, and its most important figure, was Herod, called the Great. He was the type as well as the source of all the Herods - an unprincipled adventurer, faithless and cruel beyond measure, but vigorous, talented, and attractive, of manly beauty and insidious address. The chief purpose of this alien and ignoble race was to have influence with the Jews, over whom they ruled, and who detested them as intruders into the sacred royalty of David, and also with the Roman conquerors, whose creatures and flatterers the Herods unscrupulously made themselves.

One of the wives, and one of the victims, of the bloodstained Herod the Great, was Mariamne, the beautiful princess descended from the Machabees. Herod caused his two sons by her to be strangled; one of these, Aristobulus, was the father of Herod Agrippa, mentioned above as the murderer of St. James.

Herod Antipas, the second of the Herods named "king"—this title is given to him in Mark vi. 14 — was a son of Herod the Great, and ruler of Galilee and Peræa beyond the Jordan in the days of Our Saviour. He built Tiberias, named after his patron the Roman emperor, on the west shore of the Sea of Galilee, which is the only town remaining of all those that studded the margin of the historic lake. Herod Antipas, who caused St. John the Baptist to be beheaded, is called a "fox" by Our Lord, whom he mocked in presence of his court and soldiers when Pilate sent to him the gentle Prophet of Nazareth. This Herod, worthy son of Herod the Great, having repudiated his lawful wife, the daughter of

the Arabian king Aretas, took adulterously and incestuously his own niece Herodias, the wicked wife of her uncle, the brother of Herod Antipas. This brother is called Philip by St. Mark (vi. 17); but is not the same as the Philip or Herod Philip called by St. Luke (iii. 1) tetrarch of Iturea and Trachonitis. This last was also a son of Herod the Great, and consort of Salome, the evil and ill-starred daughter of Herodias, who, at the instigation of her mother, demanded of Herod Antipas the head of St. John the Baptist.

The third of the Herods named "king" in the New Testament, and known in history as Herod Agrippa, the grandson of Herod the Great, was brought up at Rome with Drusus, the son of the emperor Tiberius. The favorite also of Caligula, successor of Tiberius, he contributed by his intrigues, perhaps principally, to the succession of the emperor Claudius. Having caused the downfall of his uncle Herod Antipas (and of Herodias), he was made king of Judea, and reunited under his scepter the kingdom of Herod the Great. Desirous that the Jews should forget his Idumean origin, he did all he could to conciliate all classes of them. But with the ferocity of the Herods he combined a strong dash of the cruelty and depravity of the pagan rulers of Rome. He loved the savage and unclean exhibitions of the Roman amphitheater, while at Jerusalem he was apparently as scrupulous as any

Pharisee. He treated the high priesthood, however, worse than did the pagan Romans, having introduced into it five impious men in the space of three years.

# II.—THE MARTYRDOM OF ST. JAMES (Acts xxii. 1–2.)

Nothing could conciliate to Herod Agrippa the favor of the Jews so much as the persecution, and, if possible, the extinction, of the irrepressible and ever-growing Christians. Fame and fortune had hitherto smiled on him. He had succeeded to the Roman usurpation of power over the high priesthood, the Sanhedrin, and the temple. All bowed before him save the Christians. He determined to strike the leaders, that the flock might be scattered. Why was St. James the Greater, the brother of St. John the Evangelist, so peculiarly obnoxious to him? Most probably because of his ardent and influential preaching of the Faith and his encouragement of his fellow-believers. The two brothers, Saints James and John, sons of Zebedee and Mary Salome, were relatives of Our Lord, and specially beloved by Him. He had called them "Boanerges"—"Sons of Thunder," because of their ardor; and this they showed in His divine company. When the Samaritans refused to receive their Master, they begged His permission to "command fire to come down from

heaven and consume them" (Luke ix. 50). Toward the close, He asked them, "can you drink of the chalice that I drink of?" But they said to Him: "We can" (Mark x. 38). They witnessed the glory of Thabor, the resuscitation of the dead, the agony in the Garden. Now, near Easter, in perhaps A. D. 43, St. James will in effect drink of the chalice, the first of the apostles to die for the beloved Master. He was slain by the sword, as St. John the Baptist, a manner of execution looked upon with honor by the Jews; and with veiled head and bound hands he was previously scourged in the ferocious and so frequently deadly manner adopted by the heartless paganism of ancient Rome. Herod, to show his esteem for Judaism, had made Jerusalem his place of residence; and had surrounded the city with a wall, much longer than any preceding one, and enclosing the new, northern quarter of Bezetha. This line of fortification has been followed more or less ever since. We can imagine the impression made on the city, thronged with countless pilgrims for the Passover, by the death of St. James and the imprisonment of St. Peter. There seems to have been no trial, and there is no detailed description of the martyrdom left by St. Luke. "He killed James, the brother of John, with the sword." According to the ancient story, dating from at least the second century, the informer, repenting, begged forgiveness of St.



THE DELIVERANCE OF ST. PETER FROM PRISON
From a fresco by Raphael in the Stanza D'Eliodoro, Vatican



James on the way to execution. The apostle embraced him, and the infuriated multitude hurried both to a like death. St. James may have been all the more notable in Jerusalem because he had returned from his preaching in Spain, whither his body is said to have been carried by his disciples. As its heavenly protector, the ardent apostle has loved the chivalrous land, whose patron he has always been in peace and war. And it was because of their conception of his character, as well as through gratitude for his favor, that the Spaniards dedicated to him one of the proudest and most famous of the military Religious Orders, the Knights of Santiago.

### III.— THE IMPRISONMENT AND DELIV-ERANCE OF ST. PETER

(Acts xii. 3-19.)

St. Peter was seized immediately after the execution of St. James, for a motive base enough—because Herod saw that "it pleased the Jews." The over-pure and scrupulous murderers wished to put back the second execution until the end of the festival, and then make it as public and impressive as possible—"intending after the pasch to bring him forth to the people." In Roman fashion he is chained to two soldiers, and given over to the guard of four squads of four soldiers each, according to the Roman manner of keeping

the night watches. "And behold an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shined in the room. And he, striking Peter on the side"mark all the details—"raised him up, saying: Arise quickly; and the chains fell off from his hands. And the angel said to him: Gird thyself and put on thy sandals. And he did so. And he said to him: Cast thy garment about thee and follow me. And going out he followed him; and he knew not that it was true which was done by the angel, but thought he saw a vision. And passing through the first and the second ward, they came to the iron gate that leadeth to the city, which of itself opened to them. And going out, they passed through one street, and immediately the angel departed from him." Some suppose that the prison was outside the city and near a place of execution, perhaps Calvary; others, that it was in the fortified palace of Herod, from which an iron gate led into the city; or, possibly, there was a closed gate between the newer and more ancient parts of Jerusalem.

St. Peter, recovering from his astonishment, or perhaps becoming more astonished still, realized his liberation by angelic aid "from the hand of Herod and the expectation of the Jews." And full of this thought, he came to the familiar house of Mary, the mother of John, who is surnamed Mark, where many were gathered together and praying, for "prayer was made without ceasing

by the Church unto God for him." Then we have all the delightful details - of his knocking at the gate, and the damsel named Rhode - her name is not forgotten - who came to harken: she knows the voice but "opened not the gate for joy; but running in she told that Peter stood before the gate." They never expected to see him again; so they said to poor Rhode, "thou art mad. she affirmed that it was so. Then they said: It is his angel. But Peter continued knocking. And when they had opened, they saw him, and were astonished. But he beckoning to them with his hand to hold their peace, told how the Lord had brought him out of prison; and he said: Tell these things to James and to the brethren. And going out, he went into another place," through prudence. How the Evangelist loves to tell the wonderful story, just as he heard it unforgotten from the lips of the Prince of the Apostles!

From St. Peter's mention of St. James the Less, the bishop of Jerusalem, and of him only amongst the apostles, we may probably gather that the others were absent. St. Peter went away probably by the ordinary route, Cæsarea, Tyre, Sidon, etc. He no doubt visited Antioch; and thence, on his Romeward way, evangelized those to whom he addressed afterward his first Epistle -"the strangers dispersed through Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia." (1 Peter i. 1.) Meanwhile Herod raged — "There was no small stir among the soldiers": Herod himself sought St. Peter, and, baffled, had the guards "examined" by torture, as seems to be understood; and finally vented his fury by ordering them "to be led away"—a significant phrase meaning execution. Then, "going down from Judea to Cæsarea, he abode there "- which seems to indicate that he changed his place of residence and gave up the persecution because of the impression made in Jerusalem by the marvelous deliverance of St. Peter.

### IV.—THE DEATH OF HEROD

(Acts xii. 20–25.)

St. Luke did not think it worth his while to narrate the pagan diversions in which Herod sought to forget his discomfiture on his way to Cæsarea. These are described by the Jewish pro-Roman historian, Josephus, who is not always either accurate or reliable. Josephus says that the king made what he intended to be a dazzling royal progress through Berytus (the modern Beyrout) and Tiberias. To the latter place he invited the neighboring kinglets; but these were ordered back by the Roman legate of Syria — a first humiliation for the vain Herod. He arrived at Cæsarea, perhaps, as it is supposed, to preside at the pagan games celebrated in honor of the Roman emperor Claudius in the beginning of A. D. He had trouble with the Phenicians of Tyre and Sidon, apparently over some commercial treaty or agreement; for these seaside cities were fed from the territory of Herod. He was enraged enough to make war on them, we may gather from the Greek. But they thought it best to make peace; and coming with great outward unanimity, they prudently bribed the Roman steward or chamberlain of Herod, and so secured an audience. It was arranged to be held in the theater — a not unusual thing. Here, the king, we are told, received them on the second day of the feast, about noon. He evidently intended to impress greatly or overawe, for he was clad in a robe of gold or silver, and was seated haughtily on a throne. The multitude of craven people, amongst whom were scattered the sycophantic creatures of Herod, exclaimed as he uttered his "It is the voice of a god, and not set address. of a man." The vain king took the honor to himself and was immediately stricken by an angel. He lingered in despairing agony for five days, and "being eaten up by worms, he gave up the ghost. But the word of the Lord increased and multiplied."

The death of Herod Agrippa ended the shadowy independence of Judea. A Roman procur-

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ator, the first since Pilate, was appointed over it; and hence, under the usually impartial administration of the empire, the Faith progressed in peace.

#### CHAPTER VIII

## THE MISSION OF SAINTS PAUL AND BARNABAS

### I.—THEIR PROJECT AND ITS DIFFICULTIES

As we know, the assigning of dates to the events in the life of St. Paul is only an approximation to the actual chronology. It is supposed that he was born the same time as Our Lord; that he was converted to Christianity about the middle of his life; and that he was martyred in A. D. 66 or 67. For eight or nine years after his conversion his position was subordinate, not being considered at all as one of the chief leaders. He springs into pre-eminence when he is solemnly appointed by the Holy Ghost and ordained at Antioch, probably in A. D. 45, for his special work amongst the Gentiles. He was a prisoner for nearly five years of his life - two years at Cæsarea in Palestine, the greater part of one year, a prisoner still, on his way to Rome; two years at Rome; and, finally, there was a term of imprisonment, probably of short duration, before his execution in the city of the Cæsars.

His great mission journeys were three, each

beginning from Antioch in Syria, and ending with a visit to Jerusalem. The first, through a portion of Asia Minor, probably began in A. D. 45, and may have occupied from less than two vears to four or five. Anyhow, he returns to Jerusalem for the apostolic assembly or Council, supposed to have been held in A. D. 52. His second mission, much longer, through the heart of Asia Minor and the eastern side of Macedonia and Greece, probably took three years - from 52 to 55. The third mission, going over the old ground and penetrating far beyond, through Macedonia and Epirus, and through Illyria, to the border of Dalmatia on the Adriatic, appears to have filled four years and a half, three of which were spent at Ephesus. His proposed, and probably accomplished, journey to Spain would have occurred after his first Roman imprisonment.

Could anything appear more quixotic to human eyes than the undertaking of a mission by two Jewish converts to convert the whole world to Christianity? The chief figure of the two was laboring from a humiliating and apparently repulsive malady: he had little of the fanciful culture of Greece or Rome; and whatever he had, he relied upon it not at all. He was low of stature, lowly in appearance, "rude" of speech. He was painfully sensitive to his own natural defects; and, probably because of his malady, shrank from being left alone. These two penniless and foot-

faring Jews had renounced their national faith for one in direct contradiction with it; for a faith hated so bitterly by their fellow-countrymen that the Founder of the new religion was crucified by them, and their hatred has practically never ceased. Christianity taught that the Law, which was identified with the nation, was of no further obligation; and that the rite of circumcision, the mark and means of Jewish justification, was no longer of value before God.

The two wayfaring converts were facing the most haughty and cultured peoples in the world, for whom philosophy, as they understood it, was, for the cultured at least, more than religion; and for whom religion was, in great part, the basest obscenity. Idolatry was interwoven with the texture of the State; pride, cruelty, luxury, sensuality, were the characteristics of the people. Slavery was universal. All these Christianity scathingly condemned. It taught the pure worship of Three Persons in One spiritual Godhead; the worship of a Crucified Man, lowly and rejected because His virtues contradicted the world, whom it proclaimed to be the Incarnate Son of God. It taught that the popular idolatries were the obscene worship of devils, personified as human vices. It insisted that all souls were absolutely of equal value before God; that all would have to answer to God exactly for their lives at the hour of death. It demanded

purity even of thought, the unity and indissolubility of marriage, belief in a revelation from heaven and a divinely established authority over faith and morals on earth. It taught voluntary poverty, the meekness of Christ, the sanctity of childhood, the blessedness of labor, sorrow, and Christian death. Nothing could conceivably be in more open contradiction with paganism. paganism despised and hated Christianity with a hatred measured by the unparalleled persecutions of more than three hundred years. Christianity won, indeed, from the beginning; and made use of Greece and Rome to convert the world. St. Peter was most acutely and magnificently right, when, in measureless boldness, after preaching to the Greeks and others of Palestine, Syria, and Asia Minor, he penetrated to the heart of the great Babylon which was Rome. And the two other ardent converts, who had seen the Incarnate Son and received the Holv Ghost, gave an example to all noble propagandists of all time, by fearlessly striking out from Antioch through Cyprus and Asia Minor.

## II.—THE ORDINATION OF THE TWO APOSTLES

(Acts xiii. 1-3.)

"Now there were in the church which was at Antioch prophets and doctors, among whom was Barnabas, and Simon who was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manahen, who was the foster brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. And as they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Ghost said to them: Separate me Saul and Barnabas for the work whereunto I have taken them. Then they, fasting and praying, and imposing their hands upon them, sent them away."

Beginning with this 13th chapter of the Acts, we have henceforth the detailed history chiefly of the missions of St. Paul - a rich and varied and glowing narrative. This is an unquestionable, and practically unquestioned, historical record from twenty years after the Crucifixion. A most valuable part of the record, or its inestimable supplement, is contained in the six Epistles written by St. Paul during his fifteen or sixteen years of active mission labor. Of these, and especially of the two most disputed; namely, those to the Thessalonians, even so radical a critic as Renan admits that "they have a character of authenticity which outbalances all other considerations" ("St. Paul"). The other four are those to the Corinthians, Romans, and Galatians.

Of the "prophets and teachers" then presiding over the Church at Antioch, Lucius of Cyrene in North Africa is said by Bede and others to have been bishop of that see, and is venerated in the Roman Martyrology as a saint on May 6. St. Manahen, the illustrious foster-brother of Herod Antipas, is venerated at Antioch on the 24th of May. It is noteworthy that Saul is mentioned last; although, a little later, the Holy Ghost put him before St. Barnabas. The practice of fasting is noteworthy, too, especially for those who consider it scarcely Christian; and all the more, because the Holy Ghost makes known during it the call of the apostles, and the fast is continued in order to obtain the special blessing of heaven on the extraordinary mission. The strange familiarity of the Divine Spirit is most remarkable of all. The Greek word for "as they were ministering to the Lord" is "as they were performing the public liturgical service to the Lord": the word is consecrated in Christian tradition, and means the celebration of Mass: hence Erasmus translates "offering sacrifice." During the sacrifice the hands of the ministers "were imposed" on Barnabas and Saul, which is the ordinary expression for priestly or episcopal consecration. Hence, immediately after (ch. xiv.), we find the two apostles appointing inferior ministers, or priests, throughout the churches which they establish. Clearly from the text, this solemn service was no mere deputation to mission work. Nor do we read that St. Paul was elsewhere made bishop. Some think the two were consecrated by Lucius and Manahen; others, that some of the Twelve were there, as for instance St. Matthias, or that St. James had come from Jerusalem. How then do we explain to the theorists of an "independent" mission and gospel of St. Paul his words that the other apostles "gave him nothing" (Gal. ii. 6). The Apostle evidently does not refer to the sacraments nor to authoritative approval, for these he certainly received from others. He was baptized in Damascus by Ananias, and he was approved by St. Peter in Jerusalem. Nor are we certain that his episcopal consecration was from an apostle rather than from inferior bishops. He certainly learned countless things about Our Lord's human life and ministry from those who had known Him. But in saying he owed nothing to others he refers solely to his vocation by Our Lord and his marvelous revelations from Him.

To this period and occasion must we refer, in all likelihood, the surpassing rapture and revelation mentioned by St. Paul in 2 Cor. xii. 2, when he was caught up into the third heaven, which, he there says, occurred about fourteen years before his writing. Let us notice that this was at Antioch. The theory regarding St. Paul's visit to Mt. Sinai and his familiar converse there with God, appears, the more we consider it, more and more fantastic.

### III.—THROUGH CYPRUS

(Acts xiii. 4-12.)

"So they, being sent by the Holy Ghost, went to Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus."

Whatever human deliberation there was about the journey may, no doubt, be attributed to St. Barnabas and his cousin St. Mark; for they were natives of Cyprus; and, we may well believe, desired the evangelization of their native island. In fact, it was the Cypriote converts who first began to announce the Gospel to the Gentiles at Antioch (Acts xi. 20). They leave, therefore, the beautiful and populous city of Antioch, the new capital of Syria, and indeed of the Church, situated partly on the northern slopes of Mt. Silpius, and extending out to the wide-curving Orontes, which here forms a great semicircle as it turns southwestward to the sea. The city stood about sixteen miles from the mouth of the river, near which stood the port of Seleucia. Both cities were foundations of Seleucus Nicator, a general of Alexander the Great, who became king of Syria and founder of the Seleucid dynastv. He had a peculiar fondness for giving to his cities the names of members of his family. Thus, we are told, he founded sixteen Antiochs in honor of his father Antiochus, nine Seleucias named after himself, five Laodiceas in honor of his mother, and three Apameas in honor of his wife.

The two missionaries easily found in the busy port a means of transportation to Salamis, a Greek foundation, as its name implies, and the chief town on the eastern coast of Cyprus. distance from Seleucia was about 100 miles. The modern traveler from Beyrout sails westward for hours by the southern coast of the island, and views with emotion the first great scene in this mission journey of Barnabas and Paul. We may imagine what their feelings were as they left Antioch and soon sighted the famous isle, the birthplace of St. Barnabas and probably of St. Mark. Here were many of their nation and many Christian converts, for the Cypriotes had already heard the glad tidings of the Faith. Some, no doubt, witnessed the wonders in Jerusalem on the first Christian Pentecost and afterward. Many of the Christians of Jerusalem had fled to Cyprus from the persecution led by St. Paul himself; and we find in Cæsarea and Jerusalem later "old disciples" who had come from Cyprus (Acts xxi. 16). What zeal would be aroused in the hearts of the two apostles by the consideration of the base paganism of the fabled birthplace of Venus? The island was dedicated to her worship, more obscene even than that of Greece and Rome: for the Cypriotes worshiped the brutally obscene Venus of the Phenicians, the symbols and manner of whose idolatry may not be described. To such a point of shamelessness can human souls descend!

The island, the largest in that part of the Mediterranean, was about 145 miles long by from thirty-five to fifty across, rich, beautiful, and healthful in those days. Two mountain-chains ran, more or less parallel, east and west, by the northern and the southern shore, enclosing in the center a vast, deeply-forested plain, well watered, chiefly by two rivers. In our day the plain is treeless and arid; and the Pediæus, which flowed by ancient Salamis, is lost in marshes before it reaches the sea. We have two familiar words, "copper" and "cypress," originating in Cyprus and from its name, which describe some of the chief products of the island in the days of St. Paul. The Phenicians had early subjugated and colonized Cyprus, and corrupted the first inhabitants, if they were any better than the Phenicians themselves.

"And when they were come to Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews." The ruins of Salamina or Salamis are still seen some four miles north of the modern Famagosta. From the fact that there were several synagogues, we gather that the Jews were very numerous in the city. And the preaching of Saints Barnabas and Paul was confined to them probably because of the hatred between themselves and the pagans, a hatred so intense as to

lead, some years later (about A. D. 116, in the reign of Trajan), to the almost incredible slaughter of 240,000 native Cypriotes by the Jews.

"And they had John also in the ministry"—St. Mark, as we naturally suppose; who left them soon after, but wished to accompany them on their second great mission journey. St. Paul would not consent, and hence his separation from St. Barnabas. The latter took his cousin with him to Cyprus a second time; and St. Mark well merited subsequently the company, praise, and affection of St. Paul.

The apostles traversed the whole island by the great route along the southern coast, between the mountains and the sea. Here were several towns. and near their sites now stand two of the principal places in modern Cyprus - Larnaca, the ancient Citium, the chief port and trade center; and Limasol, farther west, some miles south of the ancient Amathus. The modern capital, ever since the days of Guy de Lusignan, king of Jerusalem and of Cyprus, is Nicosia, or Lefcosis, situated on the central plain referred to before. West of Limasol stood Curium, through which the missionaries would pass on their way to Paphos. Paphos is the modern Baffo, a decayed village on the coast. Its name was really Nea-Paphos, for the first town stood on an elevation around a temple of Venus, a long distance farther inland.

Nea-Paphos was the seat of Roman power. Here resided the proconsul. The fact that St. Luke employs this title shows, as so commonly happens in the Acts, that he was a contemporary, and in fact an eye-witness, of the events which he describes.

Cyprus had been an imperial province, and therefore governed by a consul. But it had been handed over to the Senate; and to the governing officer in each senatorial province the emperor Augustus had given the title and rank of proconsul. The proconsul at the visit of the apostles was Sergius Paulus, of the famous Roman noble family, and probably mentioned by Pliny. This historian, too, relates the prevalence of magical practices, and the presence of magicians or sooth-sayers, in the highest families of Roman society. He speaks, in fact, of what he calls a recent school of Cyprian magic, in contrast with the Jewish, than which it was more obscene and brutal.

We are not surprised to find one of those soothsayers with Sergius Paulus. His Hebrew name was Bar-Jesu, or Bar-Josue; that is, Son of Salvation, or Saviour. But he had taken to himself the title of Elymas, or magician; and under whatever spirit he was, he quickly understood that the conversion of the proconsul would be his undoing. Sergius Paulus was "a prudent man"; that is, in Greek, a sagacious, far-seeing man, a man of sound Roman common sense. He, too,

quickly distinguished between the apostles and He "sought with anxiety and care" (according to the Greek), not to see and hear the apostles out of curiosity, but "to hear the Word of God." Hence he called the apostles to him, not by command, but by invitation. "But Elymas the magician withstood them, seeking to turn away the proconsul from the faith." Then the spirit of Paul awoke; and fixing his indignant gaze on the advocate of evil, he said: "O full of all guile and of all deceit, child of the devil" (and not of wisdom and salvation), "enemy of all justice, thou ceasest not to pervert the right ways of the Lord. And now behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a time. And immediately there fell a mist and darkness upon him; and going about, he sought some one to lead him by the hand. Then the proconsul believed, admiring at the doctrine of the Lord." From the mercifulness of St. Paul in inflicting a temporary punishment only, we may perhaps gather that Elymas, as the ancient tradition has it, was a believer for a time; and then, like his prototype, Simon Magus, fell away, and became an opponent of the truth.

Sergius Paulus "believed"; that is, according to the sense of the word in the Gospel, Acts, and Epistles, he became a sincere Christian — in fact, a saint; for he is venerated in the Roman Martyrology on March 22. The tradition is that he was consecrated bishop.

We notice here the change of name in St. Paul. Hitherto St. Barnabas appears to have directed the mission journey and work; but when there is question of the direct evangelization of the Gentiles, St. Paul takes the lead, and adopts a Roman name. Some modern theorists imagine, without any proof, that St. Paul had this name from early youth. Perhaps he had; many Jews had a second form of name, Greek or Latin, as was natural. But to suppose that the family of St. Paul had been sold to the Emilian family which bore the name of Paulus seems to be a stretching of fancy to the extreme. Whereas we have here the simple fact that the name "Paul" was now adopted by the Apostle, at the beginning of his Gentile mission, and very probably at the suggestion of his friend, the proconsul, who would recommend his own name as more acceptable, and especially as the name "Saul" in Greek had not a very nice meaning.

Christianity, planted, or at least abundantly watered, in Cyprus by Saints Paul and Barnabas, grew rapidly, boasting, after a short time, as many as thirteen bishops, Salamis becoming a metropolitan see. For more than seven centuries the island was under the Christian emperors of Constantinople. In A. D. 1191 it was taken by Richard the Lionhearted of England, and handed

over to King Guy de Lusignan. Then for three centuries it was governed by crusading Frankish kings and under the feudal system. Later it fell to Genoa, and still later to Venice. In 1571 it became Moslem territory under Selim II; but the island has always remained predominantly Greek. Its present population is about 237,000.

### IV.—IN PERGE OF PAMPHYLIA AND PISIDIAN ANTIOCH

(Acts xiii. 13-52.)

There were many reasons for remaining in Cyprus; and we can imagine how they weighed with Saints Barnabas and Mark. Not the least was the influence for good of the powerful convert Sergius Paulus. But St. Paul saw that it was not necessary, and he felt irresistibly drawn to the great whitening fields of heathendom of Asia Minor and beyond it. St. Mark, henceforth called thus by St. Paul, clearly had views of his own. Was he dreaming of great, intellectual Alexandria, the capital of Egypt? At all events, he left his two companions on the Asiatic shore, where his loss was keenly felt by St. Paul. when Paul and they that were with him had sailed from Paphos, they came to Perge in Pamphylia. And John, departing from them, returned to Jerusalem."

Asia Minor, in the days of St. Paul, although

under Roman sway, was remarkable for its territorial divisions and forms of local government, and for its diversity of races, languages, and religions. There were provinces governed by Roman officials and principalities of native rulers subject to Rome. We learn from Acts ii. 10, that, on the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem, amongst the Asiatic Jews who spoke different languages, were some from Pamphylia; in xxiv. 10, there is mention of a special language of the Lycaonians. Greek was, however, generally understood at least in a great part of Asia Minor.

Navigation, in ancient days in the eastern Mediterranean, began in March, when the seas were, as was said, open. It is supposed, therefore, that Saints Paul and Barnabas sailed from Seleucia in Syria in that month; and, having traversed Cyprus, reached Perge or Perga in summer. The apostles, very probably, did not, and could not, trace out their route beforehand in any systematic manner. St. Paul's aim was to announce the Gospel first to the Jews; which was, besides, the easier and more natural manner of accomplishing his mission; for it was easy, at first at least, to obtain a hearing in the synagogues and lodging and employment at his humble trade in their quarters in the cities. He sought, moreover, in his large missionary ambition and with his far-seeing genius, to establish important Christian centers from which the Faith

would spread almost of itself. There may have been no special motive for seeking Perge other than that it was readily approachable and on the ordinary route to central Asia Minor. The voyage from Nea-Paphos is of about 100 miles in a northwesterly direction; and the travelers would approach the Asiatic coast through the wide bay of Attalia or the Pamphylian Sea. They then sailed several miles up the river Cestrus, navigable in those days; and disembarked beneath the acropolis of the prosperous commercial city of Perge, the capital of Pamphylia. The population of the city was a mixed one, but seems to have been in great part Greek. The city is situated in a wide lowland, where fever was common in summer on the slopes of the Taurus mountains. This would explain why the two companions "passed through" the city and delayed not, availing themselves probably of some company passing the mountain gorges to escape the danger from robbers. The way was long and difficult to Antioch in Pisidia, a distance of some forty leagues, which would be a week's journey for those who traveled on foot. The wild passes of the lofty range were torn by dangerous torrents and often obstructed with snow. And it is probable enough that the dangers of the route are referred to in 2 Cor. xi. 26, where St. Paul recounts the "perils of waters, perils of robbers, perils in the wilderness, in labor and painfulness, in much

watchings, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness." This first friendless wandering and the early persecutions were never forgotten by St. Paul; and we find him referring to them in his Roman prison twenty years afterward. He writes to St. Timothy, whom as a boy of fifteen or so he converted at Lystra with his mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois—Timothy whom he loved most, his most faithful companion, his "dearly beloved son"—"Thou hast fully known . . . my afflictions, such as came upon me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured, and out of them all the Lord delivered me" (2 Tim. iii. 11).

Having passed the chain of Taurus, they were on the table-lands which extend through central Asia Minor. It was a waste, treeless, arid, windswept, and uncultivated upland; a thinly populated country of shepherds, whose low tents, familiar to St. Paul (for he used to make them of the twisted goat's hair of his native Tarsus), appeared here and there in Bedouin fashion much as they do to-day. There were salt marshes, and sometimes fresh-water lakes, frequented by thousands of storks from the waters of Egypt. As they approached Antioch they passed on their left the large and beautiful Lake Egherdir, and ten miles north of it entered the capital city of Pisidia, the country through which they were traveling. Antioch, situated on a rising ground,

was practically founded by Seleucus Nicator. It was a flourishing emporium, standing on the military road from Smyrna and Ephesus to Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, Tarsus, and Antioch of Syria. It contained, as might have been expected, many and influential Jews, who, as usual. were joined by numerous proselytes, especially ladies of distinction; and these, as often happens, induced the men to become proselytes to at least the monotheism of the Jews. When these found all that they admired most in the broader, more human, more charitable, Christian faith, without any of the distasteful obligations or practices of the Law, they gladly became Christians. Antioch was religious after its lights, or darkness; in fact, it contained a celebrated shrine of its local deity, the moon, worshiped as a male figure. The shrine had been closed by the Romans, and its thousands of priests dispersed.

One of St. Paul's most winning ways of instruction was by conversation while he worked with his hands. So we may suppose he began at Antioch. But on the Sabbath he entered the synagogue; and after the reading of the Law and the Prophets, he was invited, as was customary, to address the assembly. There is much reason to suppose that he skilfully took up the words read from Deuteronomy and Isaias, as Our Lord did at Nazareth, where He so beautifully said, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your

ears." The substance of the Apostle's discourse is necessarily always more or less the same - to remind the chosen people of their Messias, and that the Messias is Christ. There was clearly question of manner as much as of matter -" not in loftiness of speech or of wisdom . . . not in the persuasive words of human wisdom, but in showing of the Spirit and power" (1 Cor. ii. 1-4). It was the simple, direct speech of an envoy of God, oriental in form, and here and there distinctly Pauline. Not a set address of the logical West; but after the manner of instruction of a rabbi, never omitting proof from the Law and the Prophets, and seldom omitting the miraculous history of the nation. In St. Paul we have his startling half-revelations of sublimest mysteries, his tender love of Christ and souls, his enthusiastic and intensely personal current of thought, sometimes obscure, and frequently digressive. In this first recorded discourse of the Apostle, we have all his tact and love, his deep and sympathetic knowledge of his hearers. His words are manifestly for the proselvtes also - "Ye men of Israel and you that fear God." To the latter especially he recounts God's choice of Israel —"The God of this people of Israel," as it is in Greek. The Greek, by the way, which is followed by the English Protestant version, is usually admitted to be mis-arranged in verse 20; for it assigns to the government of the Judges the period of 450 years, which is too much; the Vulgate, followed by the English Catholic Bible, assigns this period to the choice and the settling of the people in the Promised Land, which would thus be reckoned from the birth of Isaac. The forty years, also, of Saul's reign includes the seven years in which Samuel ruled the people, which seven years are not reckoned in the period of the Judges. David is ever a strong witness, because "of this man's seed. God, according to His promise, hath raised up to Israel a Saviour, Jesus." And the testimony of St. John, the Precursor, is naturally invoked, and all the more because of his admitted authority amongst the Jews. With what earnestness St. Paul must have uttered his conclusion, "Men, brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you fear God, to you the work of this salvation is sent!" The Jews crucified the Saviour, it is true; "but God raised Him up," thus effacing the terrible "scandal of the Cross."

Instead of mocking the great message, the impression is extraordinary from the mere fact that the hearers, "as they went out, desired them that on the next Sabbath (also) they would speak unto them these words." But there was much more; for "when the synagogue was broken up, many of the Jews and of the strangers who served God followed Paul and Barnabas; who, speaking

to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God"

"But the next Sabbath day, the whole city almost came together to hear the word of God." The converts had evidently moved the whole population. But the Jews, who, after years, had gathered only a relatively small body of proselytes, "were filled with envy"; and resorted just to one direct argument — if such it may be called — they, "blaspheming, contradicted those things which were said by Paul." The two apostles are clearly supported by the multitude, for they denounce the Jews "boldly," saying, "To vou it behoved us first to speak the word of God: but because you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold we turn to the Gentiles." Dreadful words! Notice the strange declaration that to them was made an offer of eternal life, and that they reject it. But "the Gentiles, hearing it, were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord"-glad because of the grace received, because free of the trammels of the Law. "And as many as were ordained to life everlasting believed." Another awful word! There was a message, and there was divine grace to accept it, and those who obeyed — that is, believed — perceived quickly the presence of God, and no further argument was needed. This was predestination to eternal life — free consent to offered grace; or, if we wish, such free consent and subsequent free perseverance foreseen by God. No doubt, greater graces and more special love were shown to many who refused!

St. Paul was not only a preacher of the word of God; but he was a judge also. Hence he shook off the dust from his feet against those who "deemed themselves unworthy of eternal life." What can be more sadly impressive than the perverted course of a people called to the truth but rejecting it? We have the example of the Jews; and, also, of more than one apostate Christian country. There is a tide, a fateful crisis, in the affairs of men and of nations too, which taken at its flood, leads on to spiritual fortune, and, in fact, to eternal life or the opposite.

The Jews of Antioch, like all their countrymen, were not easily turned aside when they began a persecution. "They stirred up religious and honorable women"—their proselytes—"and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas." They knew well how to make use of the influential women for propaganda amongst the men. They finally gained the Romans, who were foes of religious agitation. It was easy to persuade them that the strange preachers were disturbers of the public peace; and so "they cast them out beyond their frontiers." But meanwhile "the word of God was published throughout the whole country"; and, even though the apostles shook off the dust

of Antioch from their feet, "the disciples were filled with joy and the Holy Ghost." And going away, St. Paul leaves after him a flourishing Christianity, which he will soon revisit, and which was destined long to continue.

## V.—ICONIUM, LYSTRA, AND DERBE (Acts xiv. 1–25.)

"But they, shaking off the dust of their feet against them, came to Iconium." We may naturally suppose that the two apostles turned their steps eastward to the more desolate country of Lycaonia in order to avoid the hostility of the Jews, for these were more numerous in the great commercial centers. The people of Lycaonia were, moreover, more simple and sincere, full of religious conviction and feeling after their pagan fashion, believing in the favor and presence of their deities, especially of the popular Jupiter and Mercury. Although they had re-named their old divinities in Greek or Roman form, the belief remained the same.

Accordingly, Saints Paul and Barnabas set out from Antioch along the military and caravan road leading southeastward toward the populous city of Iconium, the capital of Lycaonia. It was a distance of some sixty miles, requiring four or five days' travel. Iconium was an oasis in the desert, set in the midst of well-watered gardens.

The ruins of its ancient monuments still remain to testify to its early importance. It became a flourishing center of Christianity, with a long line of bishops, as had also Lystra and Derbe. In the middle ages it was famous, and was twice besieged by the Crusaders. But it was specially notable as the first seat of the Turkish sultans, the cradle of their dynasty; and their ramparts yet frown over the old town, for even its name (Konieh) continues. Its population in our day numbers about forty or fifty thousand.

"And it came to pass in Iconium that they (the apostles) entered together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spoke that a very great multitude both of the Jews and of the Greeks did believe." Because of its importance and the Roman rights with which it was endowed, the city contained many Romans and Jews. How utterly astonishing to see the rapid conversion of larger numbers of people at the plain and simple words of the two strangers! Here, however, as in every place where they were found, "the unbelieving Jews stirred up and incensed the minds of the Gentiles against the brethren." It would seem that emissaries had been sent from Antioch, as later to Lystra. But the success of the Christian preachers was brilliant; and "a long time therefore they abode there, dealing confidently in the Lord, who gave testimony to the word of His grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by

their hands." But the fight went on with Jewish persistency; "and the multitude of the city was divided; and some of them held indeed with the Jews, but some with the apostles. And there was an assault made by the Gentiles and the Jews with their rulers, to use them contumeliously, and to stone them. They, understanding it, fled to Lystra and Derbe, and to the whole country round about, and were there preaching the Gospel."

In Konieh still is seen an old Byzantine church of St. Thecla, the most illustrious virgin martyr of apostolic times, who was here converted by St. Paul. The testimony of the ancient Fathers is so luminous in her regard that it can be denied by no one save by those for whom ecclesiastical history does not exist.

Possibly St. Paul here endured one of the cruel floggings to which he afterward refers; and knowing that death would follow flogging, he fled to Lystra. This town was forty miles away to the southeast, beyond a desolate expanse, where little else was seen save herds of goats and wild asses. The apostles pass over it, and arrive at Lystra, situated at the foot of the "Black Mountain," on its northern side. Neither here nor in Derbe was there any synagogue, and the apostles were masters of the scene, at least at first. St. Paul begins with a miracle which strikingly recalls that first one in Jerusalem done by Saints

Peter and John before the Beautiful Gate of the temple. "There sat a certain man at Lystra. impotent in his feet, a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked. This same heard Paul speaking. Who looking upon him, and seeing that he had faith to be healed, said with a loud voice: Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped up and walked. And when the multitudes had seen what Paul had done, they lifted up their voice in the Lycaonian tongue, saving: The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; but Paul, Mercury, because he was the chief speaker." From the temple of Jupiter without the city came the priest with garlanded oxen to offer sacrifice to the wonder-workers. But they, in their horror, rent their garments and leaped out among the people, saying, "We also are mortals, men like unto you, preaching to you to be converted from these vain things to the living God."

"And speaking these things, they scarce restrained the people from sacrificing to them. Now there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium: and persuading the multitude, and stoning Paul, drew him out of the city, thinking him to be dead." His merciless foes, dogging his footsteps, attempt the crime of murder which they had contemplated at Iconium. The fickle multitude — for such was their reputation — either because of disappointment at the

frustrated sacrifice, or of reaction from their exaggerated conviction of the presence of their divinities, give an opportunity to the malevolent Jews. The latter probably persuade the authorities that the apostles do nothing but disturb the public peace. These were the tactics of Jerusalem —"The chief priests moved the people that he should rather release Barabbas to them: and Pilate, again answering, saith to them: What will you then that I do to the king of the Jews? But they again cried out: Crucify him!" (Mark xv. 11-13.) St. Paul, apparently dead, was dragged outside the city. But the faithful disciples stand sorrowing "round about him"; and as they stood, he rose up before their astounded eyes, and fearlessly "entered into the city." But it is vain to delay, and needless; so, "the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe. It was twenty miles farther east, near the frontier of Lycaonia, and really in Isauria, near the border of his native Cilicia. It stood near a lake, into which empties the Cybistra stream. Here we read of no persecution, but of great and abiding success - "They preached the Gospel to that city and taught many."

Perhaps some twenty or thirty miles farther east, St. Paul would approach the great pass through the Taurus mountains called the Cilician Gates. Through it lay the road to the city of his birth, Tarsus. Relatives and friends, and

probably disciples, might meet him there; and repose would be as delightful as needed. But such vision attracts him not. The heroic apostles "returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and to Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the Faith, and that through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God." Could any picture be more inspiring? They value not their lives — they fear not the weary road, nor savage country, nor more savage men. They have brought forth children to Christ; and these they must see and strengthen in the Faith. "And when they had ordained to them priests in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, in whom they believed." The Faith had spread rapidly, for there is question evidently of many churches, and not merely of Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra. We notice, too, the well-known rite of priestly ordination, and the practice of fasting. "And passing through Pisidia, they came into Pamphylia." With great prudence, and probably with secrecy, they revisit the scenes of their sufferings and triumphs. They pass again through the dangerous defile of the Taurus mountains, and arrive again at Perge on their homeward way. Now they delay longer in the beautiful city, of which the ruined monuments are still seen; and are stimulated perhaps to greater zeal by seeing the inhabitants frequent their far-famed shrine of Diana. All that St. Luke tells is that "they spoke the word of the Lord in Perge." They never spoke without fruit: and nothing is said of persecution or opposition. They do not sail down the Cestrus, by which they had ascended; but travel on foot four or five hours to Attalia, the chief port on the coast, several miles to the west of the river mouth. "Thence they sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been delivered to the grace of God unto the work which they accomplished." Perhaps they longed to see the brethren; but much more to tell of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost amongst the Gentiles. Now the hopelessness of the evangelization of the Jews was clearer, and the vocation of the Gentiles clearer also. No doubt, many questions had turned up in this great mission regarding which it was necessary to consult with the "elders"; and hence, some time after their arrival in Antioch, we have the council, or consultation, at Jerusalem

This first great mission after his appointment by the Holy Ghost left ineffaceable impressions on the heart of St. Paul — naturally enough, for it was the first, and it was marked by keen sufferings and by brilliant and definite success. There is now no possible doubt as to his destined career amongst the Gentiles. Nothing can make us understand his feelings better than his Epistle

to the Galatians; for there seems to be no doubt that thus he names those to whom he had preached in Pamphylia, Pisidia, Lycaonia, and To these he gives the general name of Galatians, because they all depended on the Roman province of Galatia. His love for them is extraordinary; they are his "little children" (Gal. iv. 19), his first-born amongst the uncircumcised. There is no trace of Judaic controversy in writing to those "who received him as an angel of God, yes even as Jesus Christ," who. seeing him so afflicted, perhaps, in his sight, "would have plucked out their own eyes and given them to him," instead of being ashamed of him as he thought they would be (Gal. iv. 14-15). He desired, he said, to bring them forth to Christ, "to form Christ in them," as a mother suffers and desires at the birth of her child. How little we understand of the wonderful mission work of St. Paul from the brief sketch of the author of the Acts! And we hesitate which to be more astonished at, the transforming love of the Apostle, or the marvelous height of spiritual knowledge to which he had brought the converts of at most a few months.

### CHAPTER IX

## THE COUNCIL AT JERUSALEM

I.— THE COUNCIL (Acts xiv. 26 — xv. 34.)

CAINTS Paul and Barnabas, arriving in Antioch, had extraordinary news to tell; and so, in joy, "they assembled the church and related what great things God had done with them, and how He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles." There is nothing but approval, congratulations, and rejoicing. The converted Hellenistic Jews of the brilliant Svrian capital had no idea of insisting on Mosaic observances, which they had not pressed on their proselytes even before they had themselves received the Faith. "And they (the two apostles) abode no small time with the disciples"—two years, supposes the ecclesiastical historian Baronius. From what we know of the activity of St. Paul, and the spreading of the Faith in the neighboring regions, we would not imagine that the Apostle spent the whole two years in the city of Antioch.

But by degrees a storm began to gather which threatened most seriously to injure, or in great part to hinder, the preaching of the Gospel. It occasioned one of the great conflicts and far-reaching victories of St. Paul. The fight did not by any means end in a few days. And to realize how intensely the Apostle of the Gentiles was moved, and how strenuously he fought, we have only to turn to his Epistle to the Galatians, in which he recounts, still in his own defense, the bitter controversy and its conclusion.

The converts of Jerusalem were naturally made up in greatest part of Pharisees. were most earnest about the Law, and most numerous amongst the people. Of them, moreover, was composed the inferior priesthood, from which many converts embraced the Faith, standing in clear contrast with the lax Sadducean band of the family and dependents of the intruded high priest. These converts from the over-strict observers of the Law found it all but impossible, if indeed they should ever deem it advisable, to relinquish the immemorial ceremonies of their religion, notwithstanding their conversion to Christ. They remembered, too, that He, their Master, observed the Law exactly, and urged obedience to it. But there were some more extreme yet; and these, as the ancient historians tell, formed a heresy in the infant Church. "Some coming down from Judea taught the brethren, That except you be circumcised after the manner of Moses, you cannot be saved." This was, as St. Peter said a little later (verse 10), "a tempting of God, to put a yoke upon the necks of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear." And he described the effect (according to the Greek text) on the ardent believers of Antioch (verse 24) as inspiring terror, and subverting their souls, as an enemy lays waste a country and carries everything off. Was not then their Christian faith sufficient for salvation without repulsive burdens of Mosaism, made so much more intolerable by the quibbles of the scribes? If they must still follow Moses, of what advantage was it to believe in Jesus? The matter seemed, assuredly, absurd enough, and in plain contradiction, not only with the revelation of the Saviour, but also with common sense, for the Law, with its unending and separatist prescriptions, had for its purpose the isolating of a stiff-necked people, and the keeping of them from the base idolatries to which they were ever prone.

Saints Paul and Barnabas "had no small contest with them." St. Paul himself is more explicit and vehement: he calls the Judaizers "false brethren, unawares brought in, who came in privately to spy our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into servitude. To whom we yielded not by subjection, no not for an hour, that the truth of the Gospel might continue with you" (Gal. ii. 4). The "no

small contest" of Acts xv. 2 is in Greek "a standing up against them, a separation from them, and a very decided controversy." The chief occasion and center of the agitation seems to have been St. Titus, who, from this passage, seems to have been a Gentile convert of Antioch, and uncircumcised. It was finally decided that Saints Paul and Barnabas and certain of their opponents should go up to Jerusalem to consult the apostles, Peter, James, and John, who were there at the time. This is supposed to have been in A. D. 52, when Claudius had expelled the Jews from Rome, and as no distinction was made between them and the Christians, St. Peter also had to flee.

Whatever heat of controversy there may have been in Antioch, the two apostles are, with affectionate honor, "brought on their way by the Church." This time they go to Jerusalem by land — a long distance, and apparently with the purpose of narrating the wonders of their Galatian mission. They "passed through Phenicia and Samaria, relating the conversion of the Gentiles; and they caused great joy to all the brethren." Such was the simple, ardent, joyous faith of the converts on the narrow strip of coast which was Phenicia, where stood Tyre and Sidon, lately all pagan through the long centuries. The travelers turn inland probably at the afterward famous city of Acre, or Ptolemais, north of

Carmel; and passing in through Samaria, come by Samaria city, converted by the deacon St. Philip, and by historic Sichem, and the muchloved Well of Jacob. They leave Bethel and Silo on their left, following the route of the Holy Family to Bethlehem; and through the storied hills of Ephraim and Benjamin reach Jerusalem. Here, with gladness and gratitude, "they were received by the Church, and by the apostles and priests (presbyters), declaring how great things God had done with them."

The controversy regarding circumcision could not be put off, especially because of the daily agape, or love-feast and participation of the Blessed Eucharist; for the Judaizers would not sit at table with the uncircumcised Titus. "The apostles and ancients (presbyters) assembled to consider of this matter"; and we have the same Greek word as before to express the heat of the disputation. The Chief, St. Peter, when all had been heard, arose to decide; and his decision was based on the plain statement of the manifestation of the divine will, and "the giving of the Holy Ghost to them (the Gentiles) as well as to us (the Jews)." This was, especially, in the case of the centurion Cornelius, fourteen years earlier. To impose the Law of Moses on the Gentile converts, therefore, was a tempting of God, as if He did not really mean what He had said and done. "And all the multitude held their peace" in respect and submission. And Saints Paul and Barnabas, who had prudently taken no part in the discussion, now skilfully avail themselves of the effect of St. Peter's address, and tell "what great signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles by them." Then arose St. James, bishop of the Holv City, called "the Just" even by the Jews, calm, prudent, kindly, ascetic, faithful to all the practices of the Law, venerating the ancient temple of God; and quoting from memory, as the Jewish teachers were wont, the word of the prophet Amos, which St. Luke quotes from the Septuagint with which he was acquainted, to show that the prophecy of rebuilding the tabernacle of David was to be fulfilled only in Christ by the calling of the Gentiles. He proposes only a few things for the conciliation of the Jews and for the preservation of the Gentile converts themselves. The use of blood as food was forbidden long before the Law, as, for instance, to Noe in Genesis ix. 4. Things suffocated were evil in the sight of pagans, we are told by Origen. drinking in a brutish manner of fresh blood drawn from living animals was not unknown, it is said, to some of the wild people in whose neighborhood Christian converts might abide. eating of food offered to idols and afterward publicly sold would be a danger of "the pollution of idols." The prohibition of fornication was specially intended for the Gentile converts because this shameful crime was not only uncondemned amongst the pagans, but was actually a part of their worship. These things were not forbidden because the Law said so, but are now condemned by the Christian Church in this first Council. The things not already forbidden by the law of nature were imposed only on the Gentile converts, and for a time — the decree of the Council was actually addressed to the converts of Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia — and fell into desuetude as the Jewish and Gentile churches coalesced more completely.

We can not sufficiently admire the calm wisdom and the fatherly charity of the apostles and elders at Jerusalem, the prompt submission of the faithful, and the grateful joy of the Antiochenes when the message was sent to them by the hand of Judas and Silas, "chief men among the brethren" in Jerusalem. And these two, "being prophets also themselves, with many words comforted the brethren (at Antioch), and confirmed them. And after they had spent some time there, they were let go with peace by the brethren, unto them that had sent them. But it seemed good unto Silas to remain there." charmed, we may well suppose, by the great prospect of a Gentile harvest. He became the companion of St. Paul, who gives him the name of Silvanus in the great mission field. He is venerated in the Roman martyrology on the thirteenth of July.

## II.— ST. PAUL "RESISTS" ST. PETER AT ANTIOCH

St. Paul was sent by the church of Antioch to settle the dispute about circumcision by an appeal to the apostles; and at the same time the Holy Spirit suggested to him by "revelation" (Gal. ii. 2) that he should go. It is a clear proof of his submission to the authority of St. Peter. In fact, it was a matter of sheer necessity for him to have the approval of Peter for his own defense against his enemies; it would have been fatal to him to say that he preached a doctrine contrary to that of the other apostles. Hence in his Epistle to the Galatians, where according to his modern traducers he maintains his own "absolute independence," he affirms "I communicated to them "- the church of Jerusalem -" the Gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but apart to them who seemed to be something, lest perhaps I should run or had run in vain." He could hardly speak more decisively. And when he says that "they added nothing," but approved his special vocation — clearly revealed by God — to labor amongst the Gentiles, entirely freeing them from any Mosaic obligations whatsoever, St. Paul is far from saying what has been so unworthily said of him — that he "openly repudiated the paraded authority of the Twelve Apostles." "And when they had known the grace that was given to me, James and Cephas and John, who seemed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the Gentiles and they unto the circumcision" (Gal. ii. 9), tolerating a little longer the Mosaic observances in order to win the Jews and their proselytes to Christ.

The Judaizers were not yet quite silenced. The apostles would not allow the imposition of the Jewish Law on the Gentile converts, but they allowed the Jewish Christians still to follow it. And the fomenters of dissension were determined to make the most of this and insist on such a Mosaic fidelity on the part of the Hebrews that the Gentile Christians would be practically excluded from communion. We can imagine how wroth was the spirit of Paul, whose vocation it was, and life-long battle to set free his converts from the yoke. A crisis occurred at Antioch after their return. St. Peter was there, and continued to sit at the love-feast with the Gentiles. But under the violent criticism of Jerusalem enthusiasts, or "false brethren," he, knowing that he was to tolerate still Mosaic customs, withdrew from the Gentiles, through weakness, or false judgment, or fear of causing scandal. It was the most natural thing in the world for the fiery St. Paul, the foe of an abrogated burden, seeing the harm and injustice to the Gentiles from the example of Peter, to wax wroth and "withstand Cephas to his face, because he was to be blamed" (Gal. ii. 11). St. Peter made no defense, showed no anger, made no appeal to his superior authority, never entertained any resentment, showed ever afterward his undiminished esteem and love for St. Paul, his writings, and his wonderful works; and cordially and loyally worked with him in one of the greatest enterprises ever consummated, the establishment of Rome, the capital of the world, the Eternal City, as the heart and head of Christendom.

#### CHAPTER X

# THE SECOND MISSION OF ST. PAUL

I.— SEPARATION FROM ST. BARNABAS (Acts xv. 35–39.)

" A ND Paul and Barnabas continued at Antioch, teaching and preaching, with many others the word of the Lord. And after some days. Paul said to Barnabas: Let us return and visit our brethren in all the cities wherein we have preached the word of the Lord, to see how they do." The life-passion of the great-hearted Paul awakens anew. His longing to revisit "all the cities" where his spiritual children dwell overcomes all fear of fatigue or danger. "And Barnabas would have taken with them John also; that was surnamed Mark; but Paul desired that he (as having departed from them out of Pamphylia, and not gone with them to the work) might not be received." According to the Greek, St. Paul "deemed it only just" that St. Mark should not be taken; he evidently had keenly felt the "defection" of St. Mark in the day of his need. "And there arose a dissen-

sion "- not without bitterness, judging from the Greek word "paroxysmos." "And Barnabas indeed taking (his cousin) Mark, sailed to Cyprus," his native island, where they had begun years before. The separation, although the bitter breaking of a brotherly bond, was, in all likelihood, for the good of Christianity. The two great souls, with more suffering perhaps, illustrated wider scenes. After evangelizing Cyprus. St. Barnabas, according to trustworthy testimony and tradition, preached with great fruit in various parts of Italy, and perhaps elsewhere. And finally returning to his fair and beloved Cyprus, he was martyred there; and his sacred remains were found long after with the Gospel of St. Matthew, written by his own hand, clasped to his bosom.

## II.— CONFIRMING THE CHURCHES (Acts xv. 40-41.)

"But Paul, choosing Silas, departed, after being delivered by the brethren to the grace of God. And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches, commanding them to keep the precepts of the apostles and the ancients." St. Paul had spent several years of his apostolic ministry in Syria and Cilicia. Thither he went (Gal. i. 21) from Jerusalem after his conversion, when, owing to the violence of the persecution, the brethren sent him away by Cæsarea. At that time he remained in Tarsus or its neighborhood a long time, perhaps two or three years. Being brought back by St. Barnabas, these two apostles taught for a year in Antioch with extraordinary success. Again he returned to labor at Antioch, or in the country around it, after the Council of Jerusalem. After his first great mission journey through Asia Minor, he teaches again at Antioch or in its neighborhood for "no small time"—some say two years. Who can tell how many churches he established in all these years of apostolic labor throughout Syria and Cilicia? Now, with the same apostolic zeal and longing, he turns with Silas to visit them all. We are not told in particular what these churches were. But as the apostle went to Derbe and Lystra, his way lay northward by the gulf of Issus, or, as we now call it, the gulf of Alexandretta, by the steep route which passed between the Amanus mountains and the sea. The first place of importance which he would meet was Alexandria, or Little Alexandria, as it was called, and now named Alexandretta, founded by Alexander the Great. It was picturesquely situated on the bay in a circle of green hills, and possessed the best harbor in Syria. It is now the port of Aleppo. Next he would pass over the famous battleground of Issus at the head of the harbor. Here

Alexander the Great vanquished Darius, and the Christian emperor Heraclius routed the terrible Persian persecutor Chosroes. Issus was naturally the meeting-place of armies, because it commanded the narrow seashore passes of the Amanus mountains leading into Syria, and hence called the Gates of Syria. Issus soon became a Christian bishopric, a suffragan of Tarsus. Mopsuestia was a long distance off, beyond the curve of the gulf. It was an ancient place, and also a great battle-ground, situated on the Pyramus, which broadened into a great harbor as it fell into the sea. This city also became an episcopal see, and was afterward a well-known name in Church history. It still exists as a village of 800 souls. A few miles west was and is Adana, once a suffragan of Tarsus, and still a Catholic see, with a population of 40,000 or more, the greatest part of whom are Christian. Adana is said to mean "the place of willows." It was an ancient Phenician colony, situated on the right bank of the Sarus; and under the Seleucid kings it was called Antioch of the Sarus. It is set in the midst of a rich and fertile plain, and commands the passes of the mountain chain between the Amanus and Taurus ranges. Next comes Tarsus itself, on the chill and swift-flowing Cydnus, with its memories of Alexander, Anthony, and Cleopatra, and of Roman emperors buried here - amongst them Julian the Apostate. It became a famous metropolitan see, no doubt owing to the name and labor of St. Paul. It was the metropolis, too, of the Roman province of Cilicia Prima. It was famous for the number and splendor of its martyrs; but now there are only a few Catholics in the midst of its Moslem population.

St. Paul did not, probably, delay long in Tarsus for the reason that he found the Church flourishing and well organized. He turns northward by the long and weary route, already known to him, through the terrible Cilician Gates of Mount Taurus, so abrupt and narrow that the way was really closed by gates in time of war. The Crusaders, marching through here, named the pass the Gates of Judas. It required four or five days to reach Derbe from Tarsus through this wild mountain way. We can imagine the hunger and watching of the weary companions. Derbe was a long way west of the Cilician Gates. Skirting the large and beautiful lake to his right, the Apostle finally reaches his beloved faith-begotten in the city which did not persecute him. He "had taught many" there during his former visit, and in "the whole country round about"; and "had ordained to them priests in every church." We may well imagine the progress made in the intervening years in the midst of the simple and faithful people who "began in the spirit" (Gal. iii. 3) so well, having received their Apostle "as an angel of God" (Gal. iv. 14). The Holy Spirit had lavished His gifts upon them; and St. Paul finds them increased in numbers, and accomplished in the knowledge and love of Him who "had been set forth crucified among them." We would have to live in those days and know St. Paul to realize the joy of his converts on seeing him amongst them.

## III.— CHOICE AND ORDINATION OF ST. TIMOTHY

(Acts xvi. 1-3.)

The one signal thing noticed by St. Luke in this visit of St. Paul to Lycaonia and Pisidia is the choice and ordination of St. Timothy as the companion of St. Paul. "And he came to Derbe and Lystra. And behold there was a certain disciple there named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman that believed; but his father was a Gentile. To this man the brethren that were in Lystra and Iconium gave a good testimony. Him Paul would have to go along with him: and taking him, he circumcised him, because of the Jews who were in those places; for they all knew that his father was a Gentile."

The vocation, the gifts, and the career of St. Timothy were extraordinary. Received into the Faith while yet a boy by St. Paul, consecrated

bishop in his youth, associated most intimately with the Apostle in his missions, dangers, and imprisonment, appointed bishop, and in fact archbishop, of Ephesus, indicated by prophecy and adorned with the most singular virtues, he fulfilled a long, difficult, and most fruitful ministry, until at last he was martyred for his zeal against paganism in the metropolitan city over which he ruled.

Of his mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois, St. Paul says that from them the boy received a "faith unfeigned" (1 Tim. i. 5) and the knowledge of the way of salvation and perfection by the most careful instruction in the Holy Scripture from his infancy (2 Tim. iii. 15). We seem to gather from St. Paul that he was the only son of a widowed mother, whose marriage with a Gentile was not against the Law, as was marriage with the Chanaanites. Hence we have examples of such marriages in Jacob, Moses, and Esther. St. Paul refers to the gentleness and affection of St. Timothy, to his tears and to his youthful diffidence and timidity. And whoever showed better his love for his young disciple? "To Timothy my dearly beloved son," he writes, "grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from Christ Jesus our Lord. I give thanks to God that without ceasing I have a remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day; desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy

tears, that I may be filled with joy" (2 Tim. i. 2-3). "Let no man despise thy youth" (1 Tim. iv. 12). To St. Paul, St. Timothy was the dearest of all his disciples, and the one who understood him best. "My dearest son and faithful in the Lord, who will put you in mind of my ways which are in Christ Jesus," writes the Apostle to the Corinthians (1 Cor. iv. 17). To the Philippians (ii. 20) he affirms that "I have no man so of the same mind, who with sincere affection is solicitous for you "--- extraordinary praise truly. To St. Timothy himself (2 Tim. iii. 10) he writes, "But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, love, patience." And in old age, and near death. some sixteen years after, to the great Apostle of the Gentiles, St. Timothy is still the same beloved son, whom he implores to come to see him before he dies (2 Tim. iv. 8, 21).

Prophecy, or revelation, either of St. Paul, or of others at Derbe or Iconium, seems to have directed the choice and made known the future fidelity of St. Timothy—"This precept I commend to thee, O son Timothy, according to the prophecies going before on thee" (1 Tim. i. 18). He was circumcised by St. Paul, who resisted the imposition of this rite on the Gentile convert Titus; for no Jew, no matter how tolerant of a Gentile convert, would sit at the love-feast with the uncircumcised son of a Jewish mother, or

admit his ministry. He must have been consecrated immediately after by St. Paul, receiving authorization to consecrate other bishops. We may, no doubt, conclude that when St. Paul appointed him to superintend the evangelization of Ephesus (1 Tim. i. 3), he made him an archbishop, since we have the testimony of ecclesiastical history - notably of Eusebius - that he presided over this see. When there was difficult and delicate work to be done, St. Paul sent St. Timothy — as to Corinth (1 Cor. iv. 17), Philippi (ii. 23), and Ephesus. Except when engaged in such ministries, St. Timothy accompanied St. Paul in his second great mission journey, accompanying, or following him to Jerusalem and Rome - for St. Paul associates St. Timothy with himself in the superscription of three of his Epistles written during his Roman captivity — those to the Philippians, and the Colossians, and to Philemon. Furthermore, the Apostle so associates his beloved disciple in the two Epistles to the Thessalonians and in the second to the Corinthians - all which, besides the two Epistles to Timothy himself, shows the extraordinary importance of the labors of St. Timothy and his widespread popularity.

What does St. Paul mean by the "confession" of St. Timothy in his first Epistle to him (vi. 12)? The Apostle puts it in juxtaposition with that of Our Lord before Pilate, and employs the

same word, "a good [in Greek, a beautiful, an excellent] confession." Hence it is considered to have been a fearless confession of his Faith when in danger of death for it, as at Ephesus, or possibly at Iconium or Lystra.

It has been supposed by many that St. Timothy is addressed under the name of the "Angel of the church of Ephesus" in the opening words of the second chapter of the Apocalypse of St. John, for he is thought to have been still living when the words were written. The reproach of Our Lord—if, indeed, addressed to him—is said to have so quickened his zeal that it provoked the pagans to slay him.

# IV.— THROUGH PHRYGIA AND GALATIA (Acts xvi. 4-5.)

"And as they passed through the cities, they delivered unto them the decrees for to keep, that were decreed by the apostles and ancients who were at Jerusalem. And the churches were confirmed in faith, and increased in number daily." There is no doubt, we may well suppose, that the apostolic band visited the churches at Antioch in Pisidia and its neighborhood after leaving Iconium. We notice the professed obedience to the apostolic authority of the Council of Jerusalem, and the constant increase in the number of believers. "And they passed through Phry-

gia and the country of Galatia." This journey would naturally be determined by their experience in Lycaonia and Pisidia, for they depended on the Roman province of Galatia proper, a wide and attractive country lying to the north. The Apostle does not, however, take the northward way directly; for it was not usual nor easy, since it led over the mountain chain, and then passed through a desert and thinly populated land. But he and his companions take the main and westward route through the well-watered valley which leads beneath the Paroreia mountains to the great Phrygian town of Synnada. This was almost as far by road from Pisidian Antioch as the latter was from Iconium. The Phrygians, originally from Thrace, were a peaceful agricultural people, secluded in their mountain regions from the intellectual and commercial Greeks of the western coast of Asia Minor. Their morals were, however, not better; nor was their religion purer. Their chief object of worship was Cybele, the so-called mother of the gods, who differed little from the vile Astarte of the Syrians and Sidonians. The voluptuous rites and self-mutilation of the devotees are a dreadful warning to fallen humanity. No baseness of depraved human nature, however, terrified St. Paul. He was greatly successful in Syria and Cyprus: he will be successful here; and will come again at the beginning of his third great mission (Acts xviii.

23), and go "through the country of Galatia and Phrygia, in order, confirming all the disciples."

It is delightful to remember that all the chief cities through which St. Paul passed became early Christian bishoprics, often of great importance. Thus the large city of Synnada, in the heart of Phrygia, became a metropolitan see. From this city the route of the apostolic band went almost directly north, some thirty or forty leagues, across the Paroreia mountain chain, through Docymee to Dorylæum, which early became a bishop's see, a suffragan of Synnada down to the twelfth century, when it fell under the sway of the Turks. Here, and over these, the Crusaders gained a famous victory. The city yet remains and with a large population.

Hence the Apostle and his companions would turn southeast, through the cities of Midaeium and Tricomia, to Pessinus, the capital of the Tolistobii, one of the three chief tribes of the Galatians. This remarkable and attractive people had come from Gaul in a great invading army about three centuries before their conversion by St. Paul. Turned aside by the Greeks of Europe, they passed into Asia Minor; and repelled by the Asiatic Greeks of Ionia in western Asia Minor, they withdrew into the mountainous center of the land, and gave it the name of Galatia. Dwelling here as federated tribes, they retained the customs, language, and to a great extent the

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religion of their fatherland. It is said that the name of their governing council recalled the Druid worship of Gaul. Conquered by the Roman consul Manlius, they retained their king, but subordinate to Rome. At the death of Amyntas, the last, some twenty-five years before Our Lord, the country became a Roman province under a proprætor. It was a beautiful and healthful land of rich, well-watered valleys.

The character of the people, as well as their physical characteristics, was Celtic, notwithstanding the mixture of Greek, Jew, and Roman. The handsome and vigorous stature, the blue eyes and fair hair — said to be still noticeable in the Armenians and Moslems of Ancyra — the warm, ardent, impulsive, sensitive nature — these were the physical and mental traits of these Asiatic Celts as of all others. And like all other Celts, they readily became enthusiastically Christian. It is possible that the mystical and dominating character of their priesthood, as well as their sanguinary expiations for sin, disposed them in some special degree to accept the supremely mystical religion and priesthood of the Crucified. At all events they received St. Paul "as an angel of God," "as Jesus Christ Himself," with so ardent a love for St. Paul, in spite of his lowliness, that they "would have given their eyes" for him, who seemed in his affliction scarce able to use his own. St. Paul, when lovingly reproaching them afterward for having allowed themselves to be led astray by false, Judaizing brethren, does not pass over faults, which, since he says they were "manifest," were probably not unknown amongst them, especially of course in their pagan days—"immodesty, luxury, idolatry, witchcrafts, enmities, dissensions, murders, drunkenness, and such like" (Gal. v. 19).

The city of Pessinus, to which St. Paul probably first came, was situated on the slope of Mt. Dindymus and on the bank of the Sangarius. It was a famous, or infamous, center of the cult of Cybele Agdistis; for here fell from heaven, according to the fable, her statue in the form of a stone, which was finally taken to Rome. The city became the head of a Christian diocese, with a line of well-known bishops; and is mentioned as still existing in the fourteenth century. From Pessinus the Apostle's way would lead northeast to the central and chief city of Ancyra, which we call Angora, famous then as now for the large export of the long, silken hair of the Angora goats. It is situated on a steep hill, near a small tributary of the Sangarius. Its remarkable ruins still attest its ancient splendor. Chief amongst these is the temple of Augustus and Rome, or the genius of the Roman empire - a popular divinity - on the marble walls of which the emperor caused to be engraved the Acts of Ancyra, or list of the benefits conferred

on subject nations by the divine Augustus. The monument is still in great part legible. The importance of the Christian see of Ancyra is attested by this that three councils — not all orthodox — were held here in the fourteenth century. It is in fact still the seat of a Catholic Armenian diocese. Eastward, at a distance equal to that of Pessinus, lay Tavium, probably the extreme point reached by St. Paul, the capital of the third great section of the Gallic tribes. Here the popular worship was that of Jupiter, represented by a colossal bronze statue. The city stood in a fertile plain, east of the Halys river. It became a Christian see subject to Ancyra down at least to the thirteenth century.

# V.— THE CALL TO GREECE (Acts xvi. 6-9.)

Having come to the extreme east of Galatia, at Tavium, and thus announced the Gospel through the entire country, St. Paul retraced his steps. His purpose was not to go into the less-known lands, but to spread the faith of Christ in the two chief nations of the world—Greece and Rome. Besides, St. Peter, following the first converts on Pentecost Sunday, had already, even judging from his Epistles alone, gone through Pontus (east of Galatia), Cappadocia, Asia (Ionia), and Bithynia. St. Paul

traverses anew all the Galatian territory in order to descend to the province which had for two centuries been called Asia by the Romans. It was the western coast, the chief part, of Asia Minor; but in the New Testament the name is applied to Lydia proper; that is, the country lying between the Caicus and Meander - the famous region of the Seven Churches, and illustrious long before as the Greek country of Ionia, the birthplace of Homer, Pythagoras, Thales, Herodotus, Sappho, etc. It was filled with populous and prosperous cities - Ephesus, Smyrna, Miletus, etc. Here lived a widely cultured and active people, distinguished for their philosophy, poetry, and art. And here, because of the great commercial centers, were many and influential Jewish communities.

St. Paul had come, evidently, to where the river valleys, especially that of the Hermus, lead down to Ionia. But "they were forbidden by the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia." They would do so later; soon St. Paul would spend two whole years in Ephesus and St. John would fan the flame of faith there more brightly. Now there was elsewhere more need and a better occasion. Forbidden to enter on the western, or southwestern way, the little band would look northward along the valley of Rhindacus, which led into Mysia and toward the rich senatorial province of Bithynia, to be afterward famous as the scene of General Councils of the Church. This region was reserved for St. Luke and others; "and when they were come into (the miserable country of) Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia; and the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not." There was then no way remaining but that through the bleak, barren, and thinly populated uplands of Mysia, almost directly west, to the Troad or land of Troy. What memories might have been here awakened! The little company of missionaries must have passed over the range of Mount Ida, which was the eastern boundary of the Troad; and descending its slopes, at the southern border of the Trojan plain, they may have passed beside the very site of the city immortalized by Homer; for many think that it stood here and not at the more recent Greek town of Ilium, much farther to the northwest. The ever-famous scenes made no impression on the mind or heart of St. Paul; not a word of description or narration was written by St. Luke. They come to Troas, the chief seaport then of northwestern Asia Minor; an ancient city, increased and renamed by a general of Alexander the Great; and much more favored by the Romans, partly because it was faithful to them, and in part because of the supposed origin of the Romans from the fugitive Trojan prince, Æneas. The ruined walls, still traced, have a circuit of six miles; but the double-basined



THE GREEK THEATER AT MILETUS View looking northwest toward the sea



harbor is filled with sand, and the impressive ruins are overgrown with oaks. Troas was, naturally, a stopping-place for St. Paul; and here he met his friends, and amongst others St. Luke. Troas became a Christian see, and the names of several of its bishops have come down to us. Such, too, was the Greek Ilium, three or four miles south of the Hellespont.

At his return to Troas St. Paul finds here a Christian community: may we not, then, suppose that he founded, or at least increased it himself during this first visit? What thoughts were his on the shore of the blue Ægean, as he looked out on the classic isles? He evidently dreamt of triumphs in either Greece or Rome; for he had come hither to plant the Cross in the proud and cultured nations. Mighty Rome fascinated the eagle heart of the Apostle, as he tells us himself. The Christian communities would be molded much after the model of legal and political Rome; and the great military power, so intensely felt in the dependencies of the empire — the proud, patient, well-trained, heroic array of the indomitable legionaries would and did impress most deeply the great, conquering, organizing, governing heart of the Apostle of the Gentiles.

Whatever dreams were his, the scene of his immediate labors was again indicated by the Holy Spirit: "A vision was showed to Paul in the night, which was a man of Macedonia stand-

ing and beseeching him, and saying: Pass over into Macedonia, and help us"-a touching and extraordinary appeal. Yet it may have been an answer to Paul's own thoughts. Macedonia had conquered the world. She had spread Greek dominion, military organization, literature, art, and religion over all the Eastern countries. She had given her language and culture already to the Christian Church. St. Paul was using her speech; St. Luke was writing his apostolic story in the same; even in Rome, Greek would be the liturgical language at first. What more natural for him who was chosen by Heaven to deliver the revelation of God and the news of redemption, and the divine life of Christ, to the nations, than to desire the conquest of Macedonia itself?

## VI.—THE COMPANIONSHIP OF ST. LUKE

At Troas there is added to St. Paul a companion of priceless worth, the first and chief bistorian of the infant Church; a man of eminent Greek culture, a distinguished and most careful writer, as moderate and unimpassioned in his personal narrative as St. Paul was sensitive and ardent. Nothing is more striking than the calm, judicious, minute, and painstaking story of this eye-witness and participant in the extraordinary events that he chronicled. He is

apparently as disinterested as a Roman judge, while he is filled with a tender sympathy that was the support and consolation of his great companion. He was a physician, too; and, possibly, he may have come to meet St. Paul at Troas because of the acute physical suffering of the latter. He was a native of Antioch, and had evidently voyaged much on the eastern Mediterranean. He knows all the coast, the direction, the seasons, tides, currents, winds, and phraseology of the sea. Without a word of introduction, or self-praise, he indicates his companionship by the personal pronoun, "we." He thus accompanied St. Paul to Philippi in Macedonia; then leaves him; and meets him in the same place, some seven years afterward, to be his inseparable companion, the next best-beloved after St. Timothy, until at least the end of St. Paul's first captivity in Rome. With the great Apostle he shares his imprisonment of two years in Cæsarea, his shipwreck and all other incidents of his voyage to Rome as a captive, and the Apostle's two years' captivity in the capital of the Empire. And at the close, in the dark days of abandonment before St. Paul's execution, the Evangelist merited the praise, "Only Luke is with me"

Why did St. Luke leave the Apostle at Philippi? Apparently to write the Gospel; and, in all probability, at the suggestion of St. Paul, who now realized the literary gifts of the future Evangelist. When St. Paul says to the Corinthians (2 Cor. viii. 18), "We have also sent with him (Titus) the brother whose praise is in the Gospel through all the churches," he refers, according to St. Jerome, Tertullian, and others, to the Gospel of St. Luke and to the writer himself: in fact, it was scarcely possible that the praise of St. Luke could have existed "through all the churches" in any other way. Now this Epistle was "written," as far as we can know, in A. D. 58; hence St. Luke would have been sent by the Apostle back to Palestine, in order "to set forth in order a narration of the things that have been accomplished among us, according as they have delivered them unto us, who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word: it seemed good to me also, having diligently attained to all things from the beginning, to write to thee in order, most excellent Theophilus." (Luke i. 1.) This is exactly the method of St. Luke - to investigate all most carefully from the eye-witnesses and narrate everything with plain and unswerving fidelity. St. Luke always conceals his own merit, is silent on the praise he deserved and received. St. Paul chooses his "beloved physician," as he used to send St. Timothy, for delicate and difficult missions, notwithstanding the great need the Apostle had of his presence. But the generous Apostle is never silent in his praise of St. Luke: he is his "fellow-laborer" (Phile. i. 20): he "salutes" with St. Paul the church of Colossa (Col. iv. 14): and at last when "all forsook me" (Paul), "Only Luke is with me" (2 Tim. iv. 11). St. Luke is venerated on the eighteenth of October. The Roman Martyrology tells that he was martyred in Bithynia; and that his bones, first borne to Constantinople, were thence translated to Padua.

#### CHAPTER XI

# THE SECOND MISSION OF ST. PAUL (continued)

#### I.— ST. PAUL IN MACEDONIA (Acts xvi. 10-40.)

"A ND as soon as he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go into Macedonia, being assured that God had called us to preach the Gospel to them. And sailing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the day following to Neapolis; and from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of part of Macedonia, a colony."

Heaven sent a favoring breeze to the little band of apostolic companions, Saints Paul, Timothy, Silas, and Luke; for they sailed "with a straight course" almost directly north at first, between the famous plain of Troy on the right, and on the left Homeric Tenedos. This was the usual route, because of the shallow water west of Tenedos; and here, to send them straight on, a stiff breeze was needed to counteract the swift current issuing, and coming against them, from

the Dardanelles, then called the Hellespont. They are amidst the Ægean Isles and on the blue Ægean Sea. They pass Imbros on the left, and are sheltered at anchor for the night on the northern side of the much more famous island of Samothrace. This latter can boast no hospitable harbor, but it is very mountainous. It was a shrine of mysterious pagan worship, rivaling Eleusis, near Athens. The next day, turning to the northwest, they pass the island of Thasos into the bay of the same name; and on its eastern side disembark at the city of Neapolis. This is the modern Kavala, a walled town of importance still, and serving as the port of Seres, as it did of ancient Philippi. It was made more important by the fact that the famous Roman road, called the Egnatian Way, which crossed Macedonia from the west, here touched the sea. We do not know whether St. Paul delayed in Neapolis: perhaps the seafaring type of people whom he saw did not present the aspect of the Macedonian of his vision. The more important place, and probably more favorable, was Philippi, ten miles north, beyond the range of the Pangæan hills. The gold mines of these hills had attracted the Macedonian conqueror, Philip. father of Alexander the Great. He founded, or at least fortified, Philippi; and gave it his name. The Romans, for much the same reason, having conquered Greece, planted here a colony of soldiers, with their privileges of Roman citizenship and law. And on the plain upon which the city looked down, was decided the fate of Rome and of the republican conspirators, Brutus and Cassius, in their defeat by Octavius and Anthony, in the year 42 before Christ.

The Macedonians thought themselves, and no doubt were, nobler and better than the Greeks; their religion and their morals were purer. Their famous military phalanxes, not unlike the hardy and well-trained Roman legions, had conquered the world. They were honest, brave, frank, and loval. The Apostle ascended the rock-cut road leading through the mountain pass, and thence looked out on the plain and on the prosperous city. It was divided by the Roman highway, the lower town containing the forum and crowded streets; the upper, the acropolis, theaters, and temples. Of these some ruins yet remain; but even the Turkish village which long retained in a modified form the name of Philippi has disappeared and is forgotten. St. Paul could have noticed as he advanced that the public monuments revealed a mixture of Roman and Macedonian paganism; but he found no trace of a Jewish synagogue, for the Jews were few. The missionaries passed some days "conferring together," either deliberating as to what they should do, or endeavoring to convince their hearers. On the Sabbath they would be likely



ST. PAUL'S PLACE OF IMPRISONMENT IN ANCIENT PHILIPPI



to see the Jewish worshipers assembling, and likely, as usual, by the lustral water of some flowing stream. They find the place of prayer outside the city by the river Gangites, even now called Angista. Ancient writers tell of the abundance of flowers, and especially of fullpetaled roses, on the hill and plain, and of shadetrees by road and river. The place of prayer must have been peaceful and beautiful; but the Apostle finds only a small number of women gathered there; so he and his companions sit down and converse with them. One at least believed —" a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, one that worshiped God, did hear, whose heart the Lord opened to attend to those things which were said by Paul." She was from the country of Lydia; but the Greek shows the name to be a proper one. She was a seller of purple cloth, the trade in which was very profitable, owing to the luxurious tastes of imperial Rome. The expression "colens Deum," "god-fearing," seems to indicate that Lydia was a proselyte to the revelation of the Jews; as her freedom in thus appearing in public reveals the greater privileges of Macedonian women and the greater respect paid to them. She was baptized with her household; and so great was her fervor and newawakened zeal, that she "constrained" the apostolic company to abide in her house. This

was an extraordinary exception to the Apostle's custom; but he is evidently greatly impressed by the faith of Lydia, and sees in her the first-fruits of Christian womanhood in Europe, upon which ever since the Gospel and the Church largely rest.

Lydia is venerated as a saint on August 3. Her house became, no doubt, as was natural and usual in similar cases, the place of celebration of the divine mysteries; but the apostles frequent the place of prayer by the river for the conversion of others. For "many days" a girl possessed by an evil spirit used to follow them, proclaiming in a loud voice, "These men are the servants of the most high God, who preach unto you the way of salvation." It is clear from the words and act of St. Paul that this pythoness was not merely epileptic or insane. The demon may have been constrained by God to bear witness to the truth, or the girl may have been endeavoring to correspond with divine grace. The diabolical witness would endeavor at length to hinder the work of St. Paul one way or another; and, therefore, the Apostle, becoming "indignant" at his audacity and wiles, drove him out. "But the girl's masters, seeing that the hopes of their gain was gone, apprehending Paul and Silas [Saints Timothy and Luke had evidently been sent on another mission] brought them into the marketplace to the rulers." They

bring up the false charge that the apostles were disturbing the city, and enhance it by adding that they were Jews, a people now made probably more odious by their late expulsion from Rome. The further accusation is advanced that these Jews were preaching a new religion. which, as all unapproved religions, was forbidden by the Roman senate. The magistrates (Duumvirs) had arrogated to themselves, as sometimes was the case, the title of prætors; and possibly through upstart conceit, or because the girl's masters were powerful, or her "spirit" had made her popular with the masses, rudely tore off the apostles' garments, had them scourged to blood with Roman violence, and sent to prison. Scourging was gravely illegal in the case of a Roman citizen unless he were guilty of a capital offense. Perhaps presuming such guilt, the jailer enclosed them in the darker inner prison, and put their feet in the stocks. Notwithstanding their bleeding wounds, and painfully constrained position, the two heroes, who possibly bore, through love of the Crucified and without protest, the savage injustice, joyfully sang at midnight a hymn to God, as was frequent with the pious. "And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken," God testifying that He would move heaven and earth in favor of His own. The chains of the prisoners were loosed from the walls and the doors opened, so that the jailer, responsible with his life for the safekeeping of those committed to him, drew his sword to slay himself. In majestic calm and zealous charity, "Paul cried with a loud voice: Do thyself no harm, for we all are here. Then calling for a light, he rushed in, and trembling fell down at the feet of Paul and Silas. And bringing them out he said: Masters, what must I do that I may be saved? But they said: Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they preached the word of the Lord to him and to all that were in his house. And he, taking them the same hour of the night, washed their stripes; and himself was baptized, and all his house immediately. And when he had brought them into his own house, he laid the table for them and rejoiced with all his house, believing God." Whether because of the wonders done, or of reflection on their cruel and illegal haste, or of the protests of Lydia and others — for the converts were influential — the magistrates sent at dawn to have the apostles set free. And the keeper of the prison told the word to Paul with joy. But the Apostle refused to go; he would insist on a judicial declaration of innocence because of the faithful. The magistrates began to fear, hearing that the two prisoners were Roman citizens: "and coming they besought them; and bringing them out, they desired them to depart out of the city." The apostles will visit their little flock of followers first: they "entered into the house of Lydia; and having seen the brethren, they comforted them and departed."

St. Paul thus founded the church of Philippi - probably in A. D. 52. He revisited it during his third mission journey, perhaps in 58, and possibly twice on that occasion. He wrote his Epistle to them from Rome, during his first imprisonment, likely in 62, and therein expresses his hope of seeing them again, while he promises to send them St. Timothy, who was specially known and dear to them, and whom for this reason he associates with himself in his customary salutation at the beginning of his writing. The Epistle manifests St. Paul's great love for these, his first and perhaps most faithful, European converts—"I have you in my heart . . . for God is my witness how I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ" . . . (Philipp. i. 7-8.) "My dearly beloved brethren, and most desired, my joy and my crown." "You have always obeyed," he continues; "not as in my presence only, but much more now in my absence" (Philipp. ii. 12). How he praises their envoy, and probably their bishop, Epaphroditus! And could anything be more affectionately gentle than his exhortation to Evodia and Syntyche to be of one mind, while he entreats Epaphroditus

to help these devoted women, who had labored so devotedly for the Gospel. It would be hard to find even in St. Paul a more delightful expression of gratitude than this to his saints of Philippi.

### II.— ST. PAUL IN MACEDONIA (THESSALONICA AND BERŒA)

(Acts xvii. 1-14.)

A day's journey brought St. Paul and his companions southwest on the Roman highway to the important and beautiful city of Amphipolis, three miles from the mouth of the Strymon river, and south of the fair and spacious Lake Cercinitis. It is supposed that there was no Jewish synagogue in the place, and so the Apostle lacked a ready means of communication with proselytes and well-disposed Gentiles as well as Jews. Thus he passed on by the lovely scenery of the Strymonic bay; leaving which and striking across what was called the Chalcidic peninsula, he reaches, almost midway, at another day's close, the city of Appolonia, south of Lake Bolbe, having left to the north, and probably unawares. the poetic vale of Arethusa, with its tomb of Euripides. It would appear from the text of the Acts that St. Paul knew of a Jewish synagogue in Thessalonica; and he went on thither without delay. Moreover, the great importance

and the teeming population of this city attracted his apostolic heart. Did he foresee how rapidly the Faith would spread from there? It was the chief city of Macedonia under the Roman domination, and the seat of the proconsular government. By its position it was a great port and emporium. Picturesquely built on the hill and plain, at the northwestern corner of what is now called the gulf of Thessalonica, it was seated on the border of a vast, rich, alluvial country, formed by the Axius (now the Vardar) and the Inje-Karasu, the chief rivers of western Macedonia. The harbor was studded with constantly incoming and departing ships, and through the city passed the soldier, the merchant, the official, the traveler, between the East and the West.

According to his custom St. Paul went into the synagogue of the Jews, "and for three Sabbath days he reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, declaring and insinuating that the Christ was to suffer, and to rise again from the dead; and that this is Jesus Christ, whom I preach to you." This was the capital point—to accept a suffering, nay a crucified, Saviour, instead of the expected earthly conqueror. "And some (Jews) believed . . . and of those that served God (sincere proselytes) and of the Gentiles a great multitude, and of noble women not a few." St. Paul, earning his bread with his own hands, was lodged in the house of Jason,

a fellow-countryman, with the Grecianized form of the name "Josue." No doubt he made many artisan converts by his conversation at his work, as was his wont (1 Thess. ii. 9). The converts, we see, were chiefly Gentiles, and, hence, the Apostle, who, not long after, wrote to them his first two Epistles from Corinth, omits, as he does for the Philippians, references to the Old Testament. All these Macedonians were staunch believers and sternly tried. They had received the Gospel with singular manifestation of the power of the Holy Ghost; they received the word in much tribulation with joy, and became a pattern to all who believed throughout Greece; so that, from them was spread abroad everywhere the word of God, as the position of their city afforded opportunity. Singularly cherished by St. Paul, they were his "joy and his crown." Their loyalty must have been truly extraordinary to justify the praise lavished upon them by the Apostle, who would gladly, as he says, have given them his very soul, and ministered unto them "as if a nurse should cherish her children." In their danger soon after, he wished to return to them, but could not, and sent Timothy from Athens.

The unbelieving Jews, moved with envy because of the great success of St. Paul, hired the roughs of the town, and attempted to seize the missionaries, in the house of Jason. Failing to

find them, they hurry Jason and other brethren before the rulers of the city, with the lying accusation that they were disturbers of the whole world (as the Greek has it); and they add the perfidious apostasy of Jerusalem, that the disciples preach another King besides Cæsar. The rulers are curiously called politarchs, and this very title has been found in an inscription in Thessalonica. They saw at once the folly of supposing that Jason was engaged in an anti-imperial revolution; and after some pledge or promise let him go. From the temper of the mob, however, and the annoyance of the magistrates, the brethren thought it best to send away Paul and Silas by night unto Berœa.

Thessalonica, still retaining its name (Saloniki), has remained through its long history a great city and a great mission center. It has had a long line of bishops, and many saints and martyrs. At one time it had the jurisdiction, and even title of patriarchate. Its history has been eventful, and often sanguinary. And even in our day, its chief churches, once so illustrious and beautiful, but now turned into mosques, appear through its shaded and picturesque streets. Even under Turkish rule, or misrule, Saloniki has continued to be the second city in what was until lately European Turkey. The Jews, expelled from Spain, were welcomed by the Turks in order to counteract the influence of the Greeks, and number 80,000 out of a total population of 120,000. The Catholic inheritors of the Faith of St. Paul are 3000. Just at present, owing to political changes, its unrivaled harbor and its converging railroads, the city is likely to grow largely and rapidly in population and wealth.

The night journey of Saints Paul and Silas was a distance of some fifty miles, southwest, and off the great Egnatian highway, which the missionaries evidently wished to avoid. They had to cross several rivers, especially the Axius, or Vardar, on the western border of whose great plain the city of Berœa stood at the foot of Mount Bermios, which belongs to the great mountain masses in whose midst towers Olympus to a height of 10,000 feet some thirty or forty miles farther south. Here St. Paul remained for a considerable time. Undismayed, he "went into the synagogue of the Jews"; and, strange to say, they "received the word with all eagerness, daily searching the Scriptures, whether those things were so. And many indeed of them believed, and of honorable women that were Gentiles, and of men not a few." What a consolation for the heroic heart of the Apostle! Animated by his success, and knowing of the persecution at Thessalonica, to which he refers so often, he wished twice to return thither; "but Satan hindered" by the violence which he caused

there. And after a while his foes learn of his success; and coming from Thessalonica, "they stirred up and troubled the multitude" so vehemently, that it became necessary to send St. Paul away, and to the sea. As the hatred of the Jews was directed against him personally, Saints Timothy and Silas remained in the promising field of Berœa. The ancient port was Dium, southeast sixteen miles away; and sailing thence south, St. Paul would see and pass the classic mountains of Olympus, Ossa, and Pelion.

Berœa still retains its name (Veria), and is as ever a pleasant town of Rumelia, with freshflowing waters of mountain brooks in its streets. It became a suffragan diocese of Thessalonica, and later a Greek metropolitan see. Its first bishop, we are told by ancient records, was St. Onesimus, once the runaway slave of Philemon, to whom St. Paul wrote an Epistle in his behalf. Berœa contains at present about 10,000 people.

The vision of St. Paul at Troas was justified: the Macedonians were ready and hungry for the Gospel; and nowhere did the Great Apostle find disciples more faithful or more beloved.

#### III.—ST. PAUL AT ATHENS (Acts xvii. 15-34.)

It was, no doubt, the condition of Greece at the time, that determined the course of St. Paul's voyage to Athens and Corinth. These were the only cities worthy of the name in the once glorious land. Corinth was large and prosperous; Athens, in every way inferior except in literature: it was on the way to Corinth, and hence the Apostle's first stopping-place. Greece, desolated by war, and still more by the rapacity and misgovernment of its Roman governors, had become a desert. The formerly cultivated and productive land lay fallow; the farms were abandoned; the much frequented ports had dwindled to insignificant hamlets. Athens, pillaged and wrecked by Sulla, who reddened the streets with the blood of her citizens, had received a measure of reparation from her conquerors, and was made a free city under the Roman governor of Achaia, which was what we know, or lately knew, as modern Greece. Her stately and artistic Acropolis stood unimpaired, with its shrines of Minerva. It is true, faith in the goddess had greatly diminished; but Aphrodite and Dionysos (Venus and Bacchus), neither of exalted morality, were, in one base observance or other, popular with the crowd. The inflexible court of the Areopagus was still supreme. Literature and art survived, though both were sterile. Foreign students came to hear the philosophers of the Stoa of Zeno and of the gardens of Epicurus, although there was no exponent of Plato or Aristotle. Athens was yet the City of the Tongue, in the later words of Tertullian; but if the Eye of Greece, its luster had grown dim.

The zeal and affection of the recent converts at Berœa impelled them to accompany the stranger Apostle to Athens itself. The voyage was one of three or four days. The ships of those days hugged the shore when they could; and so, after passing the coast of Thessaly, they made the greater part of the remaining journey through the Eubœan Channel, which separated the long island of Eubœa from the mainland of Phocis, Beotia, and Attica. When they had crossed to the north of Eubea, through what is now called the Channel of Negropont, the famous pass of Thermopylæ stood in front close to the sea. And as they issued into the Gulf of Petali, some twenty miles to the east of Athens, they passed by on their right the field of Marathon. Rounding the promontory of Sunium (now Cape Colonna), with its marble temple of Minerva, they sailed up the gulf of Athens to the Piræus, the port of the city. Before they touched the land, the proud Acropolis was plainly visible; and few hearts at all acquainted with Greek culture or history would be indifferent to the scene. St. Paul had been brought up in a city of Greek civilization. He knew how far beyond Asia Minor Greek letters and manners had penetrated; to what an extent

Syria had become Grecianized; how Alexandria had become a center of Greek literature and philosophy more famous than Athens. He saw the infant Church beginning to speak with the tongue of Greece and write with her pen. He knew that Greek would become the language of Christianity; that it would clothe the Christian mysteries in human speech, and defend them in a rejuvenated philosophy. And now he was approaching for the first time the fount of Grecian wisdom; of Attic language, which the conquests of Alexander had made almost universal; of art the most popular and perfect up to its day; and of a literature the model, in its form, of nations and of ages.

St. Paul showed by his actions, speech, and manner, that he was by no means overawed by the fame and splendor of Athenian art and letters. The city was Greece of Greece in the words of its citizens; the shrine of Greece, and especially of Greek idolatry. The soul of the Apostle, here as apparently nowhere else, "was aroused to indignation" at sight of the baseness of the religion of Athens. No pretty Greek conceit could hide from his clear eyes the uncleanness of what he so plainly calls the adoration of demons. What sublime scorn he had for a despicable art which was "avowedly the handmaid of idolatry and patroness of shame." The city was filled with idols, most of them, if not all,

representing the personification of human passions, and some of them the basest of human passions. The Greek made no mystery of his paganism; he obscured it, usually at least, by no oriental symbol or secret. He loved plastic beauty—the beauty of the human form; and the unspeakable national vices proved how long and how deeply he had been deprayed.

The road led, as it leads to-day, up from the Piræus, in a northeasterly direction. It crossed the "meek Cephisus," which waters the plain, and forms a broad belt of green on the western side of the city by the olive groves of Colonus and the gardens of Academus. St. Paul would enter the city probably by the Piræan Gate, or possibly the more remarkable Dipylon, or Double Gate, a little north of it, which led into the New Agora, or market-place, and, in general, place of public assembly of the Athenians and strangers. This was just north of the Acropolis, and grew from the old Agora, which was to the west of the Acropolis, and quite near. Both crowded with buildings and statues. In the old, stood the frescoed porch, or stoa, which gave its name to the philosophic system of Stoicism; for Zeno, the founder, and his disciples taught here. Not far were the gardens of Epicurus, the author of the philosophy of pleasure — well-regulated, be it understood, for health's sake. These two systems were then chiefly taught in Athens, because they were popular in Rome; and Roman letters and art, particularly architecture, were then displacing the Greek. The Stoic believed in nature only: the gods were mortal, and but names for the power of nature. Fate ruled all. Duty was the end of life; but as each one had no superior, no law above himself, he was the judge of duty. Let nothing move you - neither pity nor indignation. Suicide is a right, and may be a duty and a virtue. How far this from the teaching of St. Paul! To the Epicurean, the world was the work of chance: the gods do not interfere. There is no afterlife. The end of this is regulated pleasure. Self was the end of both systems - the pride of the Stoic, the pleasure of the Epicurean. There was no charity, no love of God or of our neighbor; there was naught but death in either system. These could not satisfy human souls; and the Greeks, being talkers, and not tradesmen, spent their time in idle and probably clever disputation; in conversation, probably cultured; but particularly, and naturally, inquiring about the latest news - so vain, so inconsiderate their lives.

St. Paul, dismissing his friends from Berea, "commanded them to send him Silas and Timothy with all speed." He loved, and probably needed his companions; if for nothing else, because, in all likelihood, they knew Greek and the Greek Gentile world better than he himself.



THE COLUMNS OF THE TEMPLE OF OLYMPIAN ZEUS, AND THE PARTHENON-CROWNED ACROPOLIS, ATHENS



The fanciful theory that St. Paul was nearly blind, or epileptic, or abnormally timid and nervous, is not borne out by his daily walking in the streets, and daily disputations with Jews and Greeks. "He disputed, therefore, in the synagogue with the Jews, and with them that served God "- with proselytes, namely, to Judaism. And because they were few, or not responsive, he disputed also, with glowing heart and most unconcerned courage "in the market-place every day with them that were there." He must have been the center of interest and observation. notwithstanding his imperfect Greek and his Hebrew accent —"And certain philosophers of the Epicureans and of the Stoics disputed with him." He had not the clever artifices of Greek argumentation, nor the pretty conceits of the exquisite Attic speech; and so some said, "What is it that this word-sower would say?" But others, "He seemeth to be a setter forth of new gods; because he preached to them Jesus and the Resurrection," of which his heart was full. "And taking him, they bring him to the Areopagus." "Taking hold of him," or "seizing him," is, or may be, the meaning in Greek. Within the purview of the judges of the Areopagus fell all questions of religion; and therefore the Apostle, announcing a religion radically new, was brought up the fifteen steps or so leading to the leveled summit of the famous rock,

which stood just under (to the west) the splendid entrance and ascent to the Acropolis, and in full view of helmeted and spear-brandishing Minerva herself. There is Greek courtesy in the charge, "May we know what this new doctrine is which thou speakest of? For thou bringest in certain new things to our ears: we would know, therefore, what these things mean." Here they had news enough if they could only catch it. "But Paul standing in the midst of the Areopagus, without fear or hesitation, said; Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are too superstitious." The Apostle adopted their courteous mood -- "Quasi superstitiosiores, as it were excessive, or intensely attentive, in your worship of your gods." "For I saw one of your altars dedicated to the unknown God: now it is of Him I speak to you." There were in Athens many altars to unknown gods, who probably were supposed to have afforded assistance in one need or another. But St. Paul says there was one to one unknown god: and some ancient authors say that some Athenians had erected it to the one invisible God, in whom they believed, and of whose nature they had learned from their philosophers, or from the Jews, or from others. He made all things, preached St. Paul, contrary to the teaching of the Stoics and Epicureans. He takes care of all, and can be known and found; for He is "not far from every

one of us; for — actually — in Him we live and move and are, as some also of your own poets" - Aratus, a Cilician, from the land of St. Paul, or Cleanthes, a Greek — said: "For we are also His offspring." "The Divinity is not like your gold and silver and stone idols, made in human shape by human hands: nor are we left to do as we please; for He is the judge of the living and the dead; who, also, will rise again to an everlasting life." Here the Greeks revealed their character: some mocked over the folly of the resurrection; and some more courteously said, "We will hear thee again." But St. Paul "went out from among them" without more ado. "But certain men adhering to him"—in Greek, "cleaving," or clinging to him in the vehemence of their faith -" did believe: among whom was also Dionysius the Areopagite"- one of the inflexible judges —" and a woman named Damaris, and others with them."

The seed was sown. According to the historian Eusebius, St. Dionysius became first bishop of Athens; and he is still its patron, with a very beautiful modern basilica of his archiepiscopal successor, on Homer Street, in a far prettier modern Athens. Within the sacred edifice are many life-size pictures of the Greek, and in particular of the Athenian, Popes of Rome. The Parthenon, though, became the first Christian cathedral in Athens; and around it on the rocky

plateau rested the faithful in a Christian cemetery. It is interesting to remember that the first king of modern Greece was a Catholic, Otho of Bayaria. The state law, however, forbids conversions from the schismatic Greek church. The Catholics number about 10,000, with flourishing schools both in Athens and the Piræus.

## IV.—ST. PAUL AT CORINTH (Acts xviii. 1–18)

The sail to Corinth was almost directly west from the Piræus, just south of the island of Salamis and north of Egina, through the Gulf of Athens, or, as it was anciently called, the Saronic Gulf. The distance of forty-five miles was passed over in five hours. The port of Corinth on the eastern side, or Saronic Gulf, was Cenchræ, six miles from the city, situated at the southern end of the isthmus which joins the Morea, or Peloponnesus, with the northern or continental, portion of Greece. The Corinthian Gulf, whose mouth is the Gulf of Lepanto, is about 100 miles long and cuts the country almost in two. Corinth, situated at the southwestern end of the isthmus, about two miles inland from the waters of its gulf, and on a declivity, or ledge, of the cliff-walled hill, 2000 feet high, which bore its citadel, occupied a unique position from both a military and a commercial point

of view. In the former sense, it was the recognized head and defender of the cities of the neighboring regions bordering on both sides of its long gulf. And commercially it was a gateway between the east and west, especially because of the skill of its people in transferring over the neck of the isthmus the ships which feared the perilous circumnavigation of the Morea. The Phenician traders had long since noticed the advantages of its site and availed themselves of them; and in the days of St. Paul, still frequented the city. Corinth had had a long and illustrious history under her kings or other rulers with kingly power, and was the mother of many prosperous colonies, the chief being Corcyra and Syracuse, which ministered to her wealth and power, and shaped her policy. She had been distinguished for letters and art and inventions. Her architecture gave the world the graceful Corinthian style. Her pottery and bronze ornaments were famous. And painting was either introduced into Greece or improved by her. She had declined, and finally suffered the slaughter and ruin wrought by the Roman Mummius, which left her a desert for a hundred The city was rebuilt by Julius Cæsar, who made it a Roman colony; and soon after became the capital of the Roman province of Achaia, or Greece. The new city grew rapidly in population and wealth, and in a certain literary and artistic culture, which, however, by no means equaled the old. The inhabitants were of many races, and the proverbial depravity of the city was due in part to the multitude of adventurers, and still more to the myriads of slaves, who are said to have been ten or more of every dozen of the inhabitants. The moral tone of the place was still further and more disgracefully lowered by the worship of Venus, whose shrine in the citadel, or Acrocorinth, contained a thousand so-called priestesses, given up to a life of shame. It was not without cause that St. Paul enumerates in his Epistles to the Corinthians the shameful crimes — a long list — against which he warns them; and not with exaggeration does he paint in his Epistle to the Romans (i. 21-32) one of the darkest pictures ever drawn of the vileness of paganism, from which he was sent to save the multitudes made in the likeness of God. Those crimes and vices were under his eyes in Corinth; and if there is any proof of the divinity of the Gospel it is in the quick transformation of the victims of such into "saints."

Landing at Cenchræ, St. Paul found himself a little to the south of the scene of the famous Isthmian games, and of the way over which the triremes (of Corinthian invention) were dragged to the westward gulf. After a two hours' walk he enters the eastern suburb of Corinth, cypressgroved Craneion, a place of pleasure and profit,

with its booths and countless female slaves. Here, the historians tell, was the grave of an infamous courtesan, named Lais, to whom honors semidivine were paid; and here was a monument to the cynic Diogenes, who passed in this spot a great part of his life.

A benignant Providence enabled St. Paul to make acquaintance in the city with a Jewish hushand and wife from Pontus in eastern Asia Minor south of the Black Sea From the promptness and constancy of this friendly association, and the fact that their baptism is not mentioned, it is conjectured that the couple were already Christian. As refugees from Rome and makers of tents of twisted goats' hair, they were poor. This unprofitable trade St. Paul had learned in his youth in his native Tarsus, where it was common because of the goats of the Taurus mountains; and he now resolves to live solely by it, because of the cheats and avaricious men who frequented Corinth. How prudent it was to do so, the baseless charges afterward made by his foes against the Apostle abundantly proved. Writing from Ephesus, two or three years later, to his Corinthian converts, he reminds them of his still continuing poverty, self-imposed: "Even unto this hour we both hunger and thirst and are naked, and are buffeted and have no fixed abode: and we labor, working with our own hands: we are reviled, and we bless: we are persecuted, and we suffer it" (1 Cor. iv. 11). St. Paul "reasoned in the synagogue, every Sabbath, bringing in the name of the Lord Jesus; and he persuaded the Jews and the Greeks." But when Silas came from Berœa and Timothy from Thessalonica, he was relieved in body and spirit, and was more insistent and vigorous in preaching, "testifying to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ." But this they did not wish to hear, and became hostile and extreme in their opposition; not only gainsaying, but blaspheming. The Apostle felt with extraordinary keenness this persecution of the Jews. Writing from here, probably soon after, to the Thessalonians, he brands this unceasing and universal opposition of the Jews, "who both killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and have persecuted us, and please not God, and are adversaries to all men; prohibiting us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, to fill up their sins always; for the wrath of God is come upon them to the end" (1 Thess. ii. 15). And to the Corinthians themselves he wrote afterward, "I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling" (1 Cor. ii. 3).

Hopeless of doing any further good amongst the Jews, and filled with indignation at their obduracy, St. Paul shook off the very dust of his garments against them, and said, "Your blood be upon your own heads; from henceforth I will



THE FOUNTAIN OF PIRENE AT CORINTH



go unto the Gentiles. And departing thence, he entered into the house of a certain man, named Titus Justus, one that worshiped God, whose house was adjoining to the synagogue. And Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing, believed and were baptized." Crispus, the presiding officer of the synagogue, St. Paul says he baptized with his own hand, contrary to his custom (1 Cor. i. 14); and he is venerated as a saint on the fourth of October. He baptized Caius, also; and the household of Stephanas. Of this last he writes again in the same Epistle, from Ephesus: "I beseech you, brethren, you know the house of Stephanas, and of Fortunatus, and of Achaicus, that they are the first-fruits of Achaia (the region to the west of Corinth), and have dedicated themselves to the ministry of the saints; that you also be subject to such, and to every one that worketh with us, and laboreth. And I rejoice in the presence of Stephanas, and Fortunatus, and Achaicus, because that which was wanting on your part, they have supplied; for they have refreshed both my spirit and yours" (xvi. 15). Many others are mentioned in the Epistle to the Romans, written from Corinth at a later date. Nothing is more touching than the desire of the Apostle to be remembered to his beloved converts and helpers. He writes later from Corinth to the

Romans (xvi. 1): "I commend to you Phebe, our sister, who is [a deaconess] in the ministry of the church that is in Cenchræ; that you receive her in the Lord as becometh saints [she carried the Epistle to Rome]; and that you assist her in whatsoever business she shall have need of you; for she also hath assisted many, and myself also. Salute Prisca and Aquila, my helpers in Christ Jesus, who have for my life laid down their own necks; to whom, not I only give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles." What delightful gratitude! His praise of this holy husband and wife is unsurpassed. We find him with them again at Ephesus; and in Rome they appear to have been in more comfortable circumstances. Some of the converts were of higher families, such as Chloe (1 Cor. i. 11); but, in general, there were "not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble" (1 Cor. i. 26). The women seem to have embraced the Faith in greater numbers than elsewhere; and to have been distinguished by their extraordinary devotedness and headlong zeal; so that the Apostle had to restrain them in their desire to preach. It is evident from St. Paul's detailed instructions that they were of all classes, stations, and conditions of life. Neither does he conceal the vices in which many of his new children in the faith had been immersed before their conversion (1 Cor. vi. 9).

The great number of converts, especially among the Jewish proselytes, and particularly. as usual, amongst the noble women, drove the Jews to fury. Restrained apparently under the proconsul at first in office, they attempted to avail themselves of the succession of a new and supposedly inexperienced official, the proconsul Gallio, noted universally for his culture and courtesy. It has been supposed, too, that he was appointed through the influence of a court party favorable to the Jews. St. Paul, who, in the unabated fury of the Jews, had been comforted and strengthened by a vision of Our Lord, was now seized by the multitude, and hurried before the judgment-seat, the charge being that, "this man persuaded men to worship God contrary to the law." No doubt many other violent and traitorous things were added. But the courtly Gallio, a worthy administrator of impartial Roman justice, saw through the character and temper of the crowd, and ignominiously dismissed them - ordered them out - without allowing St. Paul to utter a word of defense. Nor did the proconsul say a word when all the Gentile crowd beat Sosthenes, the new ruler of the synagogue, before the very judgment-seat. This whole court scene was a striking illustration of how the Roman magistrates and the populace of Corinth regarded the Jews.

St. Paul had been a year and a half at Corinth

(Acts xviii. 11) before this outburst of the Jews; and he profited by the justice of Gallio to stay "vet many days." We gather from his own words regarding his converts that the Faith had spread beyond the capital of the Roman province: he speaks of the "first fruits of Achaia," and "the church that is in Cenchræ"; and his second Epistle to the Corinthians is dedicated to the church at Corinth, "with all the saints that are in all Achaia." From the fervor of the new Christians and the abundance of heavenly gifts showered upon them, as well as from the assured protection of the Roman law, he felt that he could now leave them and revisit the great centers of Jerusalem and Antioch, for he had been away some three years or more. He had taken the Nazarite vow, because, perhaps, of his deliverance from the Jews; and this was to be fulfilled in Jerusalem. Seeing, however, that he could not reach the city within the specified time, he had his hair shorn in Cenchræ, and sailed with Priscilla and Aquila to Ephesus. What were his thoughts as he left Greece? The Faith had been planted in this illustrious land, whose literature, art, and culture had dominion almost over the known world. The Greek world would gradually become entirely Christian; and purified and united in a renascent empire, would become immeasurably more powerful, more influential, more beneficial, than ever before. The new empire, not of Athens, but of Byzantium, would last a thousand years longer than that of Rome, and impart to succeeding ages even the ancient literature and philosophy, with the inestimable blessings of Christian laws and Christian holiness.

The actual city of Corinth, in which St. Paul lived so long and which he loved so much, became a Christian metropolitan see, with a long and illustrious succession of prelates. But its glory has long since departed: on the ancient site, now called Palæocorinth, stands a wretched village, which, however, still contains five ancient churches. New Corinth, built in consequence of an earthquake in 1858, stands by the shore of the gulf, some miles to the northeast: its population is about 4500 souls. Cenchræ still retains its name (Kekhries or Kenkris) and site; and, at last, a ship canal between the two gulfs, begun by Nero, was finished in 1893. It is about four miles in length, and in part cut through the solid rock; on which account, probably, its achievement was left for our modern dav.

# V.—THE APOSTLE GOES BY EPHESUS TO JERUSALEM

(Acts xviii. 19-23.)

Ephesus is almost in the same latitude as Corinth: but St. Paul would have to sail around the southern side of Attica (Cape Sunium), then east through the Cyclades, the widely scattered and beautiful archipelago of Greece. The distance to Ephesus would be about 200 miles, a voyage probably of three or four days. Arriving here, the ship would delay some days in the crowded haven of Panormus; and the zealous Apostle availed himself of the opportunity of announcing the beloved Messias to the Jews. They were many and important in the multitudinous city; and apparently more tolerant because of the conflict of opinions amongst the Ephesians. They begged St. Paul to remain longer; but he said, as we have it in Greek, that by all means he must be at Jerusalem for the approaching feast, probably Pentecost. So he sailed to Cæsarea in Palestine, and went up to Jerusalem "to salute the church" and fulfil his vow. Nothing is more unfounded, or absurd, than to conclude from the jejune narrative of St. Luke that there was scant welcome for the great Apostle in the Holy City. This is an indulgence of individual fancy and preconceived opinion. St. Paul's work did not lie in Jerusalem. As the city was nearing its destruction, the condition of the people was probably not inviting. The Apostle returned, presumably, to Cæsarea; and sailed thence to Antioch. Of his welcome here or work nothing is said, save that he "spent some time." Here he was known and loved, and we can easily fancy how his days were filled. But his dream was ever of his vast and extraordinary mission-field; and his great hearthunger impelled him to visit once more "the brethren in all the cities wherein he had preached the word of God, to see how they do."

Here it may be well to refer to another fanciful, or absurd, theory, that St. Paul, in his missionary career, was a poor, miserable, "hunted" fugitive, whose life was nothing but a long martyrdom. Could anything be in more direct contradiction with his glorious, fearless, and ever marvelously triumphant career? Who ever showed more joy in his converts, or was more enthusiastically beloved? The Apostle's own words and acts are an irresistible refutation of the vagary referred to.

#### CHAPTER XII

# THE THIRD MISSION JOURNEY OF ST. PAUL

## I.— THROUGH LYCAONIA, PISIDIA, GALATIA, AND PHRYGIA, TO EPHESUS

(Acts xviii. 23.)

THE irresistible desire of St. Paul to revisit again and again the innumerable converts whom the Holy Ghost had given him along the endless routes over which he had traveled. mostly on foot, with the fatigue, hunger, and other sufferings which they entailed, and which no tongue can describe, reveal, in an extraordinary manner, the heart of the great Apostle of the Gentiles. Leaving Antioch in the favorable season, in A. D. 55, as is usually supposed, and apparently not long after Pentecost, which he had celebrated, as he purposed, in Jerusalem, St. Paul sets out northward with his companions over the same road over which he had passed with Silas, three years before. Silas, however. his heroic fellow-sufferer at Philippi (Acts xvi. 22), does not appear to have accompanied him.

He belonged to the Church of Jerusalem, in which he was one of "the chief men among the brethren" (Acts xv. 22); and so, perhaps at the suggestion of St. Paul, he may have remained. St. Peter mentions him under another form of his name (Sylvanus) as bearer of his Epistle (v. 12) to the churches of Asia Minor. But this mission of his may have occasioned his first meeting with St. Paul. The Apostle's companions now were, it seems sufficiently certain, St. Timothy, for he sends him from Ephesus to Corinth (1 Cor. iv. 17); Erastus, Gaius, and Aristarchus (Acts xix. 22, 29); and probably St. Titus, for in the Epistle to the Galatians, written afterward, he refers to Titus as if well-known to them; but Titus did not accompany St. Paul in his former visits. What thoughts awake in the heart of the Apostle as he passes through the Christian colonies in which he had so ardently labored! He sees his native Tarsus; then he faces the long and difficult pass of the Cilician Gates, through the range of the Taurus mountains; again Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, with memories, bitter and sweet, of combat and victory. He passes through Pisidian Antioch; and thence through Phrygia to the mountain valleys of the warm-hearted and much-beloved Galatians. How the churches had grown under the fostering outpouring of the Holy Spirit. There were, perhaps, shortcomings; and warnings may have

been given. The whole marvelous journey is recorded in one brief line by St. Luke. went through the country of Galatia and Phrygia, in order, confirming all the disciples." The phrase, "in order," is notable: in Greek it is "successively": he passed through the Christian centers, one after another, confirming them all — "causing them to stand firmly upon" the groundwork of their faith. This is another proof of his fond and burning zeal! He evidently found the communities well organized and fervent; for he directed that collections for his beloved poor of Jerusalem, and perhaps elsewhere, should be taken up in all the churches (1 Cor. xvi. 1). When, afterward, agents of evil, especially the Judaizers, were sowing tares amidst the wheat, we see with what vigor and love St. Paul chides and encourages his dear Galatians in his Epistle to them, probably from Corinth, some three years after.

Returning from Galatia, he arrives at Docymee in Phrygia, where the road leads down to the coastwise province of rich proconsular Asia. It was here that the Holy Ghost forbade him to turn three years before. But now the time has come; and "a great door and evident is opened unto" him (1 Cor. xvi. 9). He appears to have taken the more direct way by Synnada and the valley of the Hermus river; for the longer route farther south would have led him by, or near,

great cities, soon to have Christian communities, such as Colossa and Laodicea; and these he says, in his Epistle to the Colossians, he had not personally seen. Arriving at Sardis, the ancient capital of the Lydian kings, he would pass over into the valley of the Cayster; and traversing ancient Ionia, nearly southward, come to the capital, Ephesus, seated by the Ægean sea, one of the greatest cities of the world in those days.

Coming down toward the mouth of the river Cayster, within one mile of which the city was built, the attention of St. Paul would be arrested, before he crossed the Selinus stream, a mile or so northeast of Ephesus, by the vast and worldfamous temple of Diana, or the moon, Artemis of the Greeks, one of the many illegitimate offspring of voluptuous Jupiter. Artemis was, however, only a Greek interpretation, or effort at identification, of the demonic patroness of ancient Ephesus. She was really the obscene Astarte of the Phenicians; and the material object of veneration can not be mentioned. The "hideous symbol" in this temple, made — sad to say — more awesome by its deformity, was somewhat modified; but its signification and worship were the same. Thus the Phenicians had corrupted the Mediterranean coasts; and Ephesus, in particular, had corrupted Ionia; and this brilliant, classic land had become the corruptress of Greece. The historians tell that "the vicinity

of the great temple of Artemis reeked with the congregated pollutions of Asia." Multitudes of degraded beings, male and female, ministered in this temple, and in the festivals and processions in the city. The almost incredible popularity of the idol and idolatrous worship, and the unparalleled splendor of the edifice, assured and intensified the delusion of the multitude. Probably more than a century in building, it was the product of the thwarted religious spirit of "all Asia"; and, in fact, of Greece; for the highest artists contributed to its ornamentation. More than 400 feet long by some 200 wide, it was considered to be the most perfect creation of Ionic art. Its 128, or more, majestic pillars, each about sixty feet in height, were the gifts of kings. And to crown its satanic glamour, it was believed that the awful statue, concealed behind a great purple veil in the remotest part of the shrine, had descended from heaven, the gift, or "offspring," of Jove. This infamous worship lingered on, it is true; yet, after a few months of the preaching, ministry, and astounding miracles of St. Paul, the devoted silversmiths said that great Diana was in danger of being forgotten; and fifty years later, Pliny wrote of Asia Minor the astonishing words: "The temples are abandoned, religious festivals long since discontinued, while the priests have stopped selling the meats from the sacrifices, which no one will purchase

any more." "Not the cities merely, but the villages, and all the countryside as well," were Christian. The temple of Diana, one of the seven wonders of the world, was despoiled of its fabulous wealth by Nero, and was at length destroyed with the city by the Goths in A. D. 262. The harbor gradually filled up, and formed, with the estuary of the Cayster, a vast fever-swamp. The ruins of the great monuments were covered with mud, and forgotten; but on the hill above the temple, where St. John was buried, and which is still named after him, was built a town of considerable size. Even this, in the fifteenth century, had shrunk to the proportions of a miserable village.

Ionia was a rich, beautiful, and classic land, colonized by immigrants from Attica. It had given to Greek literature some of its most illustrious names — Homer, Sappho, Herodotus, Pythagoras, Thales, Heraclitus; although in the days of St. Paul its literary fame rested only on the light basis of the well-known Ephesian lovetales. Its long, lovely valleys of the Hermus, Cayster, and Meander, of easy intercommunication; its ports, Smyrna, Miletus, and Ephesus, long one of the best and safest on the Mediterranean coast; the great highways, inland and coastwise, which centered in Ephesus, made Ionia, with its capital, one of the richest of Roman provinces. This city, although not with-

out its multitudes of poor, was brilliant and cultured, and enriched with the commerce of East and West; but degraded in morals, and given up in an extreme degree to superstition, magic, and spiritism. These excesses were owing in great measure to the oriental population which remained or gathered on the plain beneath the hills of Coressus and Prion, on which the Greeks built their city, and between which was contained the harbor.

#### II.— CHRISTIANITY INTRODUCED INTO EPHESUS

(Acts xviii. 24 — xx. 1.)

Apparently while St. Paul was traversing Galatia and Phrygia, a very remarkable figure appeared in Ephesus, a Jew named Apollo, or rather Apollos, born in Alexandria of Egypt, and well trained in the learning, and especially in the Scriptural learning, of this famous literary center, which had witnessed the Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek—"an eloquent man, one mighty in the Scriptures." "This man was instructed in the way of the Lord, and taught diligently the things that are of Jesus, knowing only the baptism of John." We would naturally conclude, that, twenty years before, he had seen and heard the great Precursor, St. John the Baptist, in Judea; and, hav-

ing received his doctrine and baptism, returned to Egypt. "This man therefore began to speak boldly in the synagogue. Whom when Priscilla and Aquila had heard, they took him to them, and expounded to him the way of the Lord more diligently." His two instructors, mindful of the many conversions and of the dangers of the faithful in Corinth, urged Apollos to go thither, knowing how much good he would do. He went, and "helped them much who had believed; for with much vigor he convinced the Jews openly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ." The relations between St. Paul and Apollos manifest in a striking manner the nobility of character of both - no jealousy, but esteem and cordial praise and co-operation. Afterward, when a faction in Corinth adopted the name of Apollos as a watchword, this great teacher, with highminded delicacy, declined to return thither even at the prayer of St. Paul -" And touching our brother Apollo, I give you to understand that I much entreated him to come unto you with the brethren: and indeed it was not his will at all to come at this time. But he will come when he shall have leisure" (1 Cor. xvi. 12). Apollos is venerated as a saint in the martyrology on the twenty-second of April.

While this distinguished and fearless evangelist was, in the laudatory words of St. Paul, "watering" the spiritual garden of Corinth, the

Apostle himself descended to Ephesus from the "upper parts" of the country, the uplands of Phrygia. He seems to have quickly found a band of twelve who said they were "disciples." As there was no bishop at Ephesus, he naturally asked whether they had been confirmed, and so received the Holy Ghost. They answered that they knew not if there were a Holy Ghost. They had received only St. John's baptism of penance, twenty years before, in the Jordan, in all likelihood, when they had made their pilgrimage to the Temple. Being now baptized in the baptism of Jesus, St. Paul imposed hands upon them; and, as was apparently the invariable consequence, "the Holy Ghost came upon them, and they spoke with tongues, and prophesied."

The Apostle, curious to tell, was able to preach "boldly" in the synagogue of the Jews for the space of three months. But opposition of a most decided kind began to arise; and St. Paul was compelled to remove his "disciples," who were many, we may suppose, to the school of Tyrannus, a Christian no doubt, and under the sure protection of Roman law. Here he taught daily for two years, except perhaps when he made apostolic journeys to neighboring places. The unimpassioned four or five words of St. Luke give nothing but the bare fact, with, however, the extraordinary addition, that "all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of God, both Jews and

Gentiles." An enormous number must have heard the Apostle during these two years; and he was so filled with the Spirit of God, that his deeply inspired hearers rapidly spread Christianity throughout the whole surrounding country. Thus, for instance, in the valley of the Lycus, some sixty or seventy miles away inland to the east, really illustrious Christian churches sprang up in Hierapolis, Laodicea, Colossa, and other places, which St. Paul had never seen, but to which he wrote a special epistle. The most astonishing miracles accompanied the Apostle's words - "God wrought by the hand of Paul more than common miracles: so that even there were brought from his body to the sick handkerchiefs and aprons [used by him at his work]; and the diseases departed from them, and the wicked spirits went out of them." We may well imagine the effect of such wonders on a spiritist and magic-loving people like the Ephesians. Some Jewish exorcists attempted to imitate St. Paul, invoking even the Holy Name of Jesus, in which he believed and they did not. But the devil gave them a curt answer and took possession of two of them; a thing which greatly terrified both Jew and Gentile. "And many of them that believed" [in Greek, "that had already believed," and had therefore been already baptized] "came confessing and declaring their deeds." Not their magic, as has been gratuitously supposed and stated, but their sins. The Greek word for confessing points this out more clearly; as, for instance, in John i. 5, where those baptized by John "confessed their sins." Here in the Acts we have the further word "declaring their deeds"; that is (from the Greek) "relating" with more or less detail. Besides these who thus confessed, we have an entirely distinct class, who were therefore, in all probability, Gentiles -" And many of them who had followed curious [magical] arts, brought together their books, and burnt them before all; and counting the price of them, they found the money to be fifty thousand pieces of silver"-from 5,000 to 10,-000 dollars, as far as we know. No sane critic would believe that this enormous number of books was owned by the fervent Christians newly made by St. Paul. There is clearly question of pagans terrified by the power of the Apostle -"So mightily grew the word of God, and was confirmed." So rapid was the growth and so extensive, that the Apostle, writing from Ephesus to the Corinthians during this visit, salutes them, not in the name of the Ephesian Christians only, but in the name of "the churches of Asia" (1 Cor. xvi. 19).

Returning from Corinth by Ephesus, perhaps a year after, St. Paul, "sending from Miletus—twenty miles down the coast—called the ancients of the church," to give them what he be-

lieved to be his last counsels. In this parting discourse he recalled his manner of life amongst them from the first to the last day -" serving the Lord with all humility and with tears, and temptations which befell me by the conspiracies of the Jews . . . how I have taught from house to house. I have not coveted any man's silver. gold, or apparel, as you yourselves know: for such things as were needful for me and them that are with me, these hands have furnished. I have showed you all things, how that so laboring you ought to support the weak" (Acts xx. 17-35). Writing to the Corinthians during his Ephesian ministry, he said: "I think that God hath set forth us apostles, the last, as it were men appointed to death; we are made a spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men. . . . We are weak . . . and without honor. Even unto this hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no fixed abode" (1 Cor. iv. 9). Finally, in the same Epistle (xv. 32), he says, "I fought with beasts at Ephesus," which some understand to mean that he was exposed to wild beasts in the amphitheater.

The time was drawing near for St. Paul to leave this greatest and most fruitful scene of his labors. He had been in Ephesus something more than two years — three years begun, as the Hebrews reckoned — when a violent agitation against him and "about the way of the Lord"

was begun in the city. Its chief author was Demetrius, a silversmith, who gained much by his miniature silver temples of the great Diana. He was a leader amongst the craftsmen; to whom he said: "You see and hear that this Paul by persuasion hath drawn away a great multitude, not only of Ephesus, but almost of all Asia, saying: They are not gods which are made by hands. So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought, but also the temple of great Diana shall be reputed for nothing! Yea, and her majesty shall begin to be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth. Having heard these things, they were full of anger, and cried out saying: Great is Diana of the Ephesians. And the whole city was filled with confusion; and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions, they rushed with one accord into the theater." This enormous theater, capable of containing many thousands, was cut out of the base of Mount Coressus, and its vast ruins remain still. St. Paul, with amazing fearlessness and loyalty, attempted to enter the theater; but "the disciples suffered him not. And some also of the rulers of Asia, who were his friends, sent unto him, desiring that he would not venture himself into the theater." This strange act of friendship on the part of the Asiarchs, or "rulers of Asia," as they were really called, reveals the

fact that the popular commotion occurred, naturally enough, at the great May festival of Diana. The silversmiths and the crowd were disappointed at the diminished splendor. The "rulers" were leading and wealthy men, chosen from different places, to direct the ceremonies and amusements of the festival, and to furnish at least a part of the expenses. The great multitude was in utter confusion, all the more because most of them knew not the cause. The Jews, who were very numerous and influential, and who feared that they would be identified with the disciples of St. Paul, "thrust" forward through the throng a certain Alexander - perhaps the coppersmith whom St. Paul (2 Tim. iv. 14) accuses of having done him much evil. But Alexander vainly endeavored to gain a hearing. On the contrary, when the confused mass saw he was a Jew, their protests became extraordinarily emphatic, and actually, for the space of two hours, arose the multitudinous chorus, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." The recorder of the town, who was really the presiding magistrate, noticing that the crowd was growing quieter, reminded them of their causeless agitation; that nobody doubted the greatness of Diana, or that Ephesus was her "temple-sweeper"; but that, if there were any injustice done Demetrius and his fellow-craftsmen, "the courts of justice are open, and there are proconsuls." He skilfully reminds

them, too, of Roman jealousy of power and rigorous punishment of rioting; "And when he had said these things, he dismissed the assembly." But St. Paul clearly saw that he would have to leave Ephesus, and that he could do so without prejudice to the Faith: so, "calling to him the disciples, and exhorting them, he took his leave, and set forth to go into Macedonia."

St. Paul made his beloved St. Timothy bishop of Ephesus, as appears from the two Epistles to him as well as from ecclesiastical history. Christianity continued to spread until the coming of St. John the Evangelist, who became the great organizer and head of the churches of Asia. One striking fact shows how great and how developed Christianity soon became in this region; namely, that the first great Councils of the Church were held here; and in Ephesus itself, in particular, one of the greatest of the Councils, the third Ecumenical, met in A. D. 431.

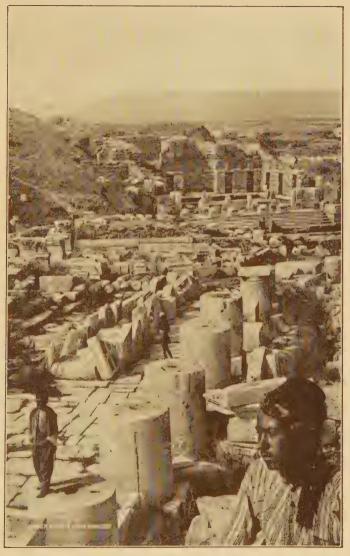
The see of Ephesus had jurisdiction over the civil territory of Asia Minor, having under it eleven ecclesiastical provinces. And even when ambitious New Rome (Constantinople) surpassed it, it yet retained thirty-six suffragan bishops. Amidst the shapeless ruins of the once proud capital may still be seen what remains of the Double Church of the Blessed Mother and St. John.

## III.—AGAIN IN MACEDONIA AND GREECE

(Acts xx. 2.)

Already, before the uproar caused by the silversmiths, "Paul purposed in the Spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying: After I have been there, I must see Rome also." (Acts xix. 21.) He sent, therefore, St. Timothy and Erastus before him especially to arrange about the collection of alms for the poverty-stricken church of Jerusalem, for which St. Paul showed constant and really extraordinary solicitude. Erastus was questor or treasurer of the city of Corinth; and became, as we learn from ecclesiastical history, bishop of Philippi, where he was martyred on July 26. After the departure of his two companions, as it seems, St. Paul learned "by them that are of the house of Chloe" news of the troubles which had begun to agitate the church of Corinth - there was discord, and some had endeavored to undermine the authority of St. Paul; some had fallen back into the dissoluteness of their former life; Christians, in their dissensions, had contended before the pagan courts; some thought it no sin to eat of meat offered to idols; and the abuses regarding the agape and the Blessed Eucharist were so grave that many

were sick and many had died as a punishment. Apparently soon after, and with better news, arrived from Corinth Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus; by whom St. Paul sends his first Epistle to the Corinthians. In his second Epistle he assured them, "Out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you with many tears " (2 Cor. ii. 4). Clearly matters were not quite settled by the first letter. He had resolved, he said, to go directly to Corinth; but he did not - no doubt to let passions cool, and to await the effect of his instructions and remonstrances. Meanwhile he sent the kindly and prudent Titus (2 Cor. xii. 18), who was able to report better things - the obedience, namely, "of all; how with fear and trembling you received him"; for they knew he came in the name of God. The Apostle, meanwhile, set out for Troas: and here he found many hearts open to the Gospel —" a door was opened unto me in the Lord"; but he was deeply afflicted because Titus had not met him with news from Corinth - "I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother" (2 Cor. ii. 13). He therefore bade the faithful farewell, and passed into Macedonia. Here acute sufferings assailed him: "our flesh had no rest, but we suffered all tribulation; combats without, fears within: but God, who comforteth the humble, comforted us by the coming of Titus" (2 Cor. vii. 5, 6). By him he sent to



AMID THE RUINS OF EPHESUS
View from the theater terrace toward the "library"



the Corinthians the second Epistle, so full of zeal and love, and noble self-defense in favor of his converts. These two heart-revealing and majestic letters deal with doctrines of the greatest weight — the divine authority of the Apostles, the Real Presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Eucharist, the indissolubility of Christian marriage, the superiority of virginity, the manner of the resurrection. With Titus was sent St. Luke, "the brother whose praise is in the Gospel through all the churches" (2 Cor. viii. 18). "Our mouth is open to you, O ye Corinthians; our heart is enlarged" (2 Cor. vi. 11). "For I am jealous of you with the jealousy of God; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (2 Cor. xi. 2). So writes and loves St. Paul.

Before going to Corinth, St. Paul made mission journeys of great length and importance, of which St. Luke says not a word in his Acts. We learn from Rom. xv. 19, that he went into Illyricum, which is west of Macedonia, along the Adriatic Sea; and from 2 Tim. iv. 10, that St. Titus was sent later into Dalmatia, which is north of Illyria. The manner in which the Apostle described his preaching is very remarkable—"By the virtue of signs and wonders, in the power of the Holy Ghost, from Jerusalem, round about, as far as unto Illyricum, I have replenished the Gospel of Christ"; that is, "I

have widely diffused, or fully preached" (Rom. xv. 19).

Of St. Paul's ministry in Macedonia, in those churches so flourishing and so beloved, St. Luke says that the Apostle "exhorted them with many words." We can imagine the enthusiastic discourse, the vehement, love-tempered zeal of a preacher flushed with the triumphs of Ephesus. Coming to Cenchræ and Corinth, how many friends he would meet! Probably Saints Titus and Luke; surely St. Timothy, for he was his companion from there; Aristarchus, whom he calls his fellow-captive in Coloss. iv. 10, whom he made bishop of Thessalonica, and who is venerated as a saint on August 4. Caius was his host (Rom. xvi. 22); and here were, amongst others, his ever faithful Ephesians, Tychicus, and Trophimus.

The Apostle remained three months in Greece, chiefly, we may suppose, at Corinth and Cenchræ. Phebe, a deaconess of the latter place, carried to Rome the famous Epistle to the faithful of that city; which, therefore, we may suppose to have been written here. The agitation of these churches was pacified, as we may gather from the deep, peaceful tone of the Epistle, which has been so dishonored by being heralded as the gospel of revolt and of the puerile theory of justification by faith alone. About the same time, it is supposed, St. Paul in consequence of

bad news from the Galatians, wrote to them an Epistle full of vehement appeal and affection, and as vehement condemnation of the Judaizers, who would impose upon the Gentile converts the Law of Moses and the rite of circumcision.

St. Paul, aware by revelation and by the marvelous spreading of Christianity that it was to rule over the world, and stimulated by his incomparable triumphs, longed to visit the mistress of the world, imperial Rome. Did he know, too, that the first terrific persecution of Nero was impending? The fame of the faith of the Roman Christians was already world-wide (Rom. i. 8); so that even St. Paul himself hoped to be "comforted" by it (Rom. i. 12). It was a faith founded on luminous knowledge and fulness of charity (Rom. xv. 14). Everything goes to show that St. Peter was absent from the city at the time; but St. Paul evidently knows intimately the condition of the Christians, for here he had many friends, many being his own converts. Here were, amongst so many others whom he fondly salutes in this Epistle, his old companions and hosts, Aquila and Priscilla. He must have had, then, frequent and copious correspondence. The Roman Christians were predominantly Gentile, as we may gather even from the Epistle; but there was a mixture of converts from the various sects and races, some of whom retained, in what St. Paul calls weakness of faith, yet a weakness to which the stronger should condescend, some of their former pious or ascetical observances — discrimination of days, especially the observance of the Sabbath; abstention from meat and wine, and so on (Rom. xiv). With affectionate prudence St. Paul wrote of these.

#### CHAPTER XIII

#### THE LAST VISIT TO JERUSALEM

### I.— RETURN TO TROAS. THROUGH THE ÆGEAN ISLES

(Acts xx. 3 — xxi. 6.)

IN THE spring of A. D. 59, as is commonly I thought, St. Paul determined to sail from Corinth as directly as might be to the Syrian coast, in order, we naturally suppose, to spend the Passover in Jerusalem, or rather to celebrate where it happened the Resurrection which he had made the basis of his preaching. Just before starting, the discovery of a conspiracy of the Jews to destroy him on the sea, made him hastily change his plan, and turn northward by land toward his converts of Macedonia. Of his seven companions, all but St. Luke are sent before him to await at Troas, perhaps because of some matter regarding the collection of alms, or because some favorable opportunity offered for embarking. With joy of himself and his converts, he celebrates Easter at Philippi, or Easter and Passover together; for "the days of the Azymes" appear to have been prudently 253

observed. This seems to have been at the beginning of April; and here we begin to have again the most minute and interesting details of the journey from St. Luke, who rejoins St. Paul after an absence of six or seven years. Because of calms or adverse winds, five days were spent on the passage to Troas; and here they remain seven days. St. Luke employs the familiar expression of the first Christians, "On the first day of the week, when we were assembled to break bread"—the love-feast and the Blessed Eucharist on Sunday. We can not say whether it was Saturday evening, on which the service always began, or Sunday evening, when St. Paul, about to depart on the morrow, prolonged his heartfelt discourse until midnight, in that upper chamber on the third floor, where there were many lamps, because, no doubt, there were many brethren. A young man, Eutychus, overcome by sleep, fell from the window on which he was sitting, and was "taken up dead." It would appear to have been near the moment of consecration of the Sacred Elements. But the Apostle hurried down; and in his tender and sorrowful sympathy bent down over the body of the youth; and, as the Greek has it, "folded his arms quite around him," saying to his companions, "Be not troubled, for his soul is in him." Then he ascends; and having broken and received the consecrated bread, talked still with them till

daylight, and departed. Meanwhile those who cared for the injured Eutychus brought the youth alive, "and they were not a little comforted." St. Paul, leaving his companions to sail south twenty miles or so to Assos, went himself on foot by the shore. Probably some friends or ministry awaited him at Assos, a Greek city, of which the ruins yet look down on the blue waters. Thenceforward, St. Luke appears to indicate each day's journey and the place of anchorage at night. In a day or less they come to the lovely harbor of Mitylene, in our day a most attractive little city, with its broad scarf of olive groves, the capital of famous Lesbos, the birthplace, it is thought, of Sappho and Alcæus, and of lyric song. "And sailing thence, the day following we came over against Chios," famous for its wine, between it and the promontory of Clazomenæ; "the next day we arrived at Samos; and "["staying in Trogyllium," adds the Greek text,] "the day following we came to Miletus." Trogyllium is across the strait from Samos, and sheltered by Mount Mycale. They had already passed in front of Ephesus, where St. Paul determined not to delay; "for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to keep the day of Pentecost at Jerusalem."

Miletus, on the southern side of the Latmic gulf, opposite the mouth of the Meander river, and at the outlet of the rich valley through which 256

it flows, was at one time one of the greatest of Greek cities, monopolizing the chief source of Ionian wealth — namely, the trade of the Black Sea — and having founded there, as well as on the Propontis, or Sea of Marmora, and on the Hellespont, more than sixty cities, amongst them poetic Abydos. Red war and the change of many masters led to its decline; and in the days of St. Paul it was greatly surpassed by Ephesus. But, like Ephesus, it was destined to disappear. Its river mouth and harbor silted up, forming a great marsh, under which the proud city of the Lion and the Star, its blazon, has been covered. It had been, also, a noted seat of literature, and especially of historical and philosophical literature, counting amongst its distinguished sons Thales, Æschines, and, later, Isidore, the architect of St. Sophia. Many saints and martyrs sanctified this great city, which was once a metropolitan see.

In the soul-touching address of St. Paul to the bishops whom he had called hither from Ephesus and its neighborhood, we may notice the words describing his preaching: "For three years I ceased not with tears to admonish every one of you night and day. . . . Such things as were needful for me and them that are with me, these hands have furnished." He uttered the all-impressive admonition that "the Holy Ghost had placed them bishops to rule the church of

God, which He hath purchased with His blood": and warns of the "ravening wolves," soon to arise even amongst themselves. They arose in his own day, as he mentions in his Epistles to St. Timothy - Hymenæus, Alexander, Phygellus, and Hermogenes. Then ensued the touching scene: "When he had said these things, kneeling down he prayed with them all. And there was much weeping; and falling on the neck of Paul, they kissed him; being grieved most of all for the word which he had said, that they should see his face no more. And they brought him on his way to the ship." Such was the parting. That St. Paul visited Ephesus and Miletus again seems clear, since he wrote to St. Timothy in his second Epistle to him that he left Trophimus sick at Miletus, which must have happened after his first captivity in Rome.

Having set sail they "came with a straight course to Coos," the wind being evidently favorable. The small harbor of Coos, although suitable only for small ships, was safe and was sought by seafarers. The island is in front of the great gulf of Halicarnassus; and its only town, in our time, is the capital, of the same name, situated at the eastern extremity of the island, and remarkable for its fortress of the Knights of St. John. In fact the most interesting thing in its modern history is that it belonged to these monastic warriors. A spring which

supplies the town with water, is named after the famous physician of ancient times, Hippocrates, who was born here. Two-thirds of the present population of the island are Christian.

Next day they round the long promontory of Cnidos, the southern boundary of the gulf, and sail on to ever-famous Rhodes. Situated off the southwestern corner of Asia Minor, this beautiful and fertile island, abounding in streams, became very powerful and very famous. It was a land of legend and poetry; but its chief romance was its occupation and defense by the celebrated Knights of St. John. Their city, built where once shone the splendor of the ancient capital, at the extreme northeast of the island, whose name it bore, remains almost as it was when the military monks, the best soldiers the world ever saw, departed. The principal street, straight as their lances, bears everywhere their carved escutcheons on the arches beneath which they so proudly rode their war-horses. Their several heroic defenses of the fortress are writ on the golden scroll of history. But the greatest of all was the last, in 1522; when, after four months of siege, probably never equaled in the record of man, the little band of heroes. unaided by any European power, having capitulated on honorable terms, sailed away from the last outpost of Christian civilization in the East.

The immense majority of the present population of Rhodes is Greek Christian.

St. Paul and his companions, sailing from Rhodes, after one night's anchorage, cross almost east, to the coast of Lycia, where the tawny Xanthus — the name indicates the color comes down to the sea in the shadow of Mount Cragus. On the southern side stood Patara, where they appear to have found without delay a ship sailing to the Phenician coast. The distance between was about 450 miles; and, with favorable winds, could be passed over in four days. Midway, Cyprus rose upon their view. What thoughts it awakened in the heart of St. Paul — of his first mission after having been chosen by the Holy Ghost at Antioch, and of St. Barnabas, his lovable and beloved companion! All day long the travelers' eyes rested on the mountain-chains and verdant shore. At length they reach Tyre and many friends, for here the Church was numerous and St. Paul was welcome indeed. In his joy he "tarried there seven days." And again, as had happened in every city where he passed, according to his word to the elders at Miletus, "The Holy Ghost witnesseth that bands and afflictions await me at Jerusalem": "The disciples said to Paul through the Spirit that he should not go up to the city. But "the days being expired," continues St. Luke, "departing we went forward,

they all bringing us on our way, with their wives and children, till we were out of the city; and we kneeled down on the shore, and we prayed. And when we had bid one another farewell, we took ship, and they returned home."

### II.—GOING UP TO JERUSALEM—THE RIOT IN THE TEMPLE

(Acts xxi. 7 — xxii. 29.)

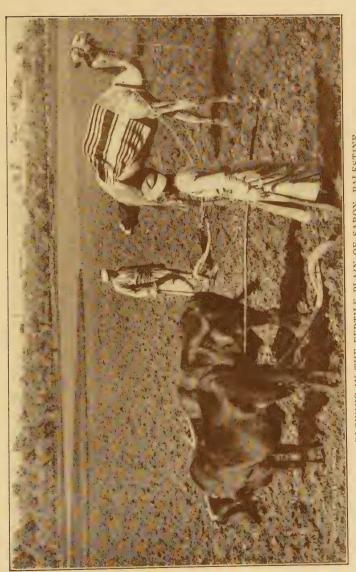
The travelers sailed down the shore of ancient Phenicia, about twenty-three or twenty-five miles, to Ptolemais, the new name of which indicates the sway of the successors of Alexander. The city, destined to be so famous in crusading times, stood six miles from Mount Carmel, across its lovely bay. The immemorially pagan city has "disciples," whom St. Paul visits. Thence some forty miles by, or through, the Plain of Saron to the new city of Cæsarea, the Roman capital of Palestine. The house of the great evangelist, the holy deacon St. Philip, was the recognized hospice of the wayfaring Christian. His bold evangelization of the Samaritans and others in the first days of Christianity had pointed out to St. Paul what the work of the Church was to be. What conversations they must have had about the extraordinary beginnings, about St. Stephen, about St. Paul's own conversion, and the wonders of his worldwide

ministry! The four daughters of St. Philip, virgin prophetesses, are venerated as saints. It would be difficult to realize the far-reaching effect of the evangelization of those who came and went through the frequented port of Cæsarea by this apostolic family. St. Paul tarried with them almost to the eve of Pentecost. During this time came from Judea the prophet Agabus, who had predicted at Antioch (Acts xi. 28) the famine which occurred under Claudius; and binding himself symbolically with the girdle of St. Paul, foretold that thus would the Apostle be bound in Jerusalem and delivered to the Gentiles. At this the disciples wept, and besought their great leader not to go up to the city. But he lovingly reproached them; and protested that he was ready, not only to be bound, but to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. "And when we could not persuade him," adds St. Luke, "we ceased, saying: The will of the Lord be done." Some from Cæsarea fearlessly accompany St. Paul, bringing with them one of the first believers, the Cypriote Mnason, who was to lodge them in his house in Jerusalem. The distance to Jerusalem was about seventy-five miles, occupying three days. They may possibly have passed through Sichem of many memories. How interesting to them the city which had received so richly the early outpouring of the Holy Spirit! Or they

may have taken the great highway along the Plain of Sharon to Lydda, which would recall the first miracles and triumphs. Then southeast to Jerusalem. They are received by the brethren gladly. It was probably late in the day. On the following day, St. Paul having recounted the marvelous announcement and spread of the Gospel throughout a great part of the most famous countries of the world, the whole assembly of the elders with St. James, hearing, glorified God. Not a shadow of the fantastic "coldness" of the brethren of Jerusalem, nor of the fabled awfulness of "James"! The Christian Jews of the city, now very numerous, naturally and prudently observed still many, if not all, the prescriptions of the Jewish Law - not, of course, the absurd "traditions" of the Pharisees. They were the best and most perfect Christians of all; and many of them thought that St. Paul went too far in urging, as they believed he did, the Jewish converts to relinquish all the deeply venerated religious practices of their highly favored race. St. Paul, then, unhesitatingly accepts the prudent counsels to appear publicly in the temple in company with Nazarites accomplishing the pure and pious vow which he himself had made in Greece. He spent seven days in or near the Court of Israel, raised above that of the Gentiles. Toward the close he was recognized by Asiatic Jews, who

appear to have known, and perhaps persecuted, him in his missions. They had seen him in the city with Trophimus, and so they accuse him of having violated the temple by introducing the uncircumcised. The outcry in the temple arouses the city; and a furious multitude drag St. Paul from the sacred precincts; having closed the doors, they were about to kill him. The ever-watchful tribune of the Roman soldiers stationed near the temple, and overlooking its porches, quickly learned what was going on, summoned his soldiers, and rushed down into the crowd, apparently in the Court of the Gentiles. Jewish blood had often been poured out on the temple pavement when they ventured to revolt, and they knew there was no possibility of trifling with the Roman guard. They desist from beating St. Paul. The tribune, drawing near, caused him to be arrested and bound with two chains, demanding who he was and what he had done. It was impossible to learn anything in the tumult, so he commanded that the prisoner be brought into the fortress of the Antonia tower. He was carried by the soldiers owing to his chains and the extreme violence of the people, who pressed after him, crying out, "Away with him!" As they were ascending the stairs which led up from the Court of the Gentiles to the prætorium, or military residence of the tribune, St. Paul said in Greek to the officer, who walked

beside him: "May I speak something to thee?" The latter, surprised, answered, "Canst thou speak Greek? Art not thou that Egyptian who before these days didst raise a tumult, and didst lead forth into the desert four thousand men that were murderers?" The tribune refers to a sedition, of which, if not quite recent, the memory remained vivid. It was that of an Egyptian pseudo-Messias, who led out a multitude of fanatics to Mount Olivet. The soldiers of the governor fell upon them, and slaughtered many, but the leader escaped. St. Paul answered the officer, "I am a Jew of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city; and I beseech thee suffer me to speak to the people." The officer, undeceived, gave St. Paul leave to defend himself; and with calm and fearless zeal, he turned round and addressed the crowd in Hebrew. The intrepidity of the Apostle, the permission of the commanding officer, and especially the use of Hebrew speech, with, no doubt, the conciliatory manner of address - St. Paul noticed evidently priests in the tumultuous gathering - won the silence of his hearers. "Men, brethren and fathers," he said, "hear ye the account which I now give unto you." And he told of his origin and zeal for the Law, of his vision of the Saviour, and the commission to the Gentiles. "And they heard him until this word; and then lifted up their voices, saying: Away with such an one



PLOWING IN THE FERTILE PLAIN OF SARON, PALESTINE



from the earth, for it is not fit that he should live. And as they cried out and threw off their garments, and cast dust into the air, the tribune commanded him to be brought into the castle, and that he should be scourged and tortured, to know for what cause they did so cry out against him." A furious scene, and a strange proceeding, but not unusual. St. Paul was quickly stripped and bound by order of the centurion, to whom the tribune handed him over. But the Apostle quickly asked if it were lawful to scourge a Roman citizen uncondemned. Both centurion and tribune, neither probably Roman by birth, halted immediately. The tribune wished to be sure and questioned St. Paul, doubting, it would seem, that a Jew could have bought the privilege of citizenship. But the calm of the prisoner reassured him.

#### III.—TRIAL OF ST. PAUL. PLOTS AGAINST HIS LIFE

(Acts xxii. 30 — xxiii. 35.)

Next day the prisoner was brought up unbound before the supreme council of the Jews, the tribune wishing to know the charge which they had against him. "And Paul, looking upon the council, said: Men, brethren, I have conversed with all good conscience before God until this present day. And the high priest

Ananias commanded them that stood by him to strike him on the mouth. Then Paul said to him: God shall strike thee, thou whited wall: for sittest thou to judge according to the law, and contrary to the law commandest me to be struck?" Ananias, of the "hissing vipers" of the house of Annas, was one of the most disgraceful of the intruded pontiffs, and well deserved the prophetic condemnation of St. Paul. Put in office by Herod Agrippa, he was deposed by the governor Felix, and was murdered by the assassins that he himself had employed. The high priest was not, by his office, the president of the council: St. Paul saw that this man was the presiding judge, but did not personally know him. "And they that stood by said: Dost thou thus revile the high priest of God? And Paul said: I knew not, brethren, that he is the high priest."

In this wild and cruel assembly there was little hope of justice; but St. Paul knew they were not all of one mind; some being Pharisees, who, whatever their faults, believed in the resurrection; and others Sadducees, the courtly, unbelieving party of the high-priestly family of Annas. Hence the Apostle "cried out" in the council, "I am a Pharisee, the son of Pharisees; concerning the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question." He was, indeed, truly "in question," because of his preaching

of the only truth and hope of the resurrection from the dead. "And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the multitude was divided. . . . And there arose a great cry. And some of the Pharisees, rising up, strove, saying: We find no evil in this man. What if a spirit hath spoken to him, or an angel?" The over-nicely delicate critics, who strain at a gnat and swallow a camel, condemn St. Paul for disturbing the peace between the fastidious Pharisees and selfindulgent Sadducees. The Apostle's word was true, and possibly he intended to urge anew the doctrine of the resurrection. And even if he did wish to divide the council of his deadly foes, who would not applaud his self-possession and cleverness? His own danger, however, was so imminent that "the tribune, fearing lest Paul should be pulled in pieces by them, commanded the soldiers to go down, and to take him by force from among them, and to bring him into the castle." In his prison here, the night following, "the Lord, standing by him, said, Be constant; for as thou hast testified of Me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome" - and so the dream of Paul would be fulfilled.

Meanwhile a band of more than forty Jews swore neither to eat nor to drink until they had killed him. The chief priests and ancients clearly received with approval the murderous

proposition, and entered into the traitorous plot to deceive the tribune so that he would bring the Apostle again before the council, and while the accused was coming to slay him. But St. Paul's sister's son, who therefore appears to have been a Christian, had heard of their lying in wait and bravely and quickly reached his uncle in the military prison, who sent him to the tribune. The latter received him kindly, and warned him to keep silence about his information. the officer commanded two of the centurions to get ready a numerous band, so insecure were the roads — two hundred infantry, seventy cavalry, and two hundred spearmen. They were to escort St. Paul to Cæsarea, and to be ready at the third hour of the night, namely nine o'clock, when darkness would have calmed or shrouded the turbulent city. In his official note, the tribune, Claudius Lysias, explained that he had saved the life of the prisoner, a Roman citizen, and with "nothing laid to his charge worthy of death or bands," but sent on to the governor Felix at Cæsarea because of the plots of the Jews. The soldier band started with military precision, north and then northwest to the border of Samaria, where they came out on the high road along the Plain of Sharon. Arriving here, at Antipatris, about half the way to Cæsarea, they await the dawn; then the legionaries of the infantry return to Jerusalem, and the horsemen

accompany St. Paul. Entering Cæsarea they immediately present the prisoner and the official charge; and Felix, having read it, asked, apparently with official courtesy, of what province St. Paul was, and understood that he was of Cilicia. "I will hear thee, said he, when thy accusers come. And he commanded him to be kept in Herod's judgment hall."

#### CHAPTER XIV

# ST. PAUL BEFORE FELIX AND AGRIPPA. HIS IMPRISONMENT. HE APPEALS TO CÆSAR

(Acts xxiv. 1 — xxvi. 32.)

I T SEEMS, and was, extraordinary, as well as humiliating, that the high priest himself and the chiefs of the priestly rulers should appear before a pagan judge who was the master of Israel. But their hatred of St. Paul was so extreme that they were prepared to go to any lengths. They went promptly to Cæsarea -five days after St. Paul left Jerusalem, it seems - for, amongst other reasons, the trial of a Roman citizen could not be put off. They bring a hired Roman lawyer, for the pleading was in Greek. His speech was skilful, beginning with hypocritic praise of Felix, who had done some good, it is true, but more evil, and accusing the prisoner of riotous conduct and profanation of the temple. These two charges were easily disproved; nor had the Asiatic Jews, his first foes, appeared against him. But as to the third charge, that he was "the author of the sedition of the sect of the Nazarenes," St. Paul touchingly

answered, "This I confess to thee, that according to the way that they call a heresy, so do I serve the Father and my God." In Him. he continued, was his, as well as also the Jews'. hope of resurrection. In fact it was, he added, for his profession of faith and hope in the resurrection that the council of the Jews arose against him. Felix knew well the character and religious disputes of the Jews, and the rise of Christianity amongst them. Seeing then the cause of their accusations against St. Paul, he "put them off, saying: When Lysias the tribune shall come down, I will hear you." While leaving the Apostle under military surveillance, the governor allowed entire freedom of communication with his friends. The courtesy and fair play of Felix were accompanied with still deeper feelings. Returning to Cæsarea, as it seems, after some days, with Drusilla, a Jewess, sister of King Agrippa, and wife of the king of Emessa, whom she had abandoned. "he sent for Paul and learned of him the faith that is in Christ Jesus." Felix, who had risen from slavery, was a bad and cruel man, of a life stained with murder and lust. The fearless zeal of the Apostle was not restrained in the presence of the guilty pair. His discourse on justice and chastity and the judgment to come terrified them, and they had the prisoner removed. Felix, however, often called him; and, as St. Paul had

spoken of the alms which he had brought to his fellow-Christians of Jerusalem, the grasping governor hoped that the Apostle would offer a bribe for his freedom. But since he would not, he was kept two years in captivity; and finally, with further injustice, left bound, Felix wishing to show favor to the Jews, perhaps in order to mitigate their hostility. In consequence of a sanguinary riot in Cæsarea, many Jews being slain by the soldiers and the houses of the wealthy sacked, Felix was recalled and disgraced. His sinful consort, Drusilla, perished, with her illegitimate son, in the eruption of Vesuvius under Titus.

The apostolic spirit of St. Paul was by no means inactive during the two years in Cæsarea; and perhaps at this time St. Luke wrote out in order his previously prepared Gospel narrative, or gave to it the last touches under the eye of his beloved master.

To Felix succeeded the upright Festus, who, on his arrival in Cæsarea went up to Jerusalem. "And the chief priests and principal men of the Jews went unto him against Paul." And with murderous malignity, they requested as a favor that Paul should be sent for trial before them in Jerusalem, being determined to kill him on the way. The Roman Festus answered with official dignity and independence, "That Paul was kept in Cæsarea, and that he himself would very



THE HARBOR OF ANCIENT CÆSAREA



shortly depart thither. Let them go with him in a few days," and on the day following their arrival, he sat in the judgment seat, and commanded Paul to be brought. The same accusations are made as before, with the same noble refutation. But Festus, as it seems in good faith, but wishing to show a favor to the Jews, asks if the prisoner is willing to be tried in Jerusalem, he himself, no doubt, purposing to go with him, and preside at the trial. But the Apostle knew what would be the result, and simply said: "I stand at Cæsar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged." The call of Rome was ever heard in his heart, and now he could go. Festus may have been surprised; but having consulted with his council he could not gainsay. "Hast thou appealed to Cæsar?" he said: "To Cæsar shalt thou go."

After some days there came down to Cæsarea from the Lebanon mountains an important person, with the shadowy title of "king." It was Agrippa II, son of Agrippa I, who had died so miserably here at Cæsarea. He was king of Chalcis; that is, of the city of that name, and of a few others near it in Coele-Syria, or the valley between the two chains of the Lebanon mountains. This diminished and uncertain sovereignty he really held at the will, and as a servant, of all-ruling Rome. He came down, then, to pay his respects to the recently appointed procurator.

With him came his sister Bernice, whose name was not above reproach, and who, afterwards, because of familiarity with the emperor Titus, was by him, though unwillingly, banished from Rome, in obedience to the indignant demand of public opinion. Grandchildren of Herod the Great, and with certain rights, in the person of Agrippa, over the religious position and organization of the Jews, they still sustained the pomp of their house. Nor was Agrippa a stranger to that of imperial Rome, where he had spent many of the early years of his life. "They tarried many days." And Festus told them of "a certain man" left prisoner by Felix; against whom, he said, the chief authorities of the Jews had brought unfounded accusations of evildoing. These were merely "questions of their own superstition against him, and of one Jesus deceased, whom Paul affirmed to be alive"strange matter, and of little consequence, or interest, to a Roman officer. But this man had appealed to the imperial court, and it was greatly embarrassing to have nothing definite to write about his case to Rome. He therefore wished, as King Agrippa knew the state of things better, to have his opinion of the case. The latter immediately expressed a wish to hear St. Paul: "To-morrow," said Festus, "thou shalt hear him."

Agrippa and Bernice came "with great

pomp" into the hall of audience and there was a brilliant gathering, military and civil, all that the fair, wealthy and populous Cæsarea could offer -" the tribune and principal men of the city." In the midst of the impressive assembly, Festus, in a brief speech, signified to the king and all others present the purpose of the meeting; which was not, of course, a trial. "Then Agrippa said to Paul: Thou art permitted to speak for thyself." And the Apostle expressed his satisfaction in being heard by one who knew so well the doctrines and customs of the Jews; then he summed up briefly his early life in Pharisaism, and immediately introduced again the doctrine and hope of the resurrection, for which, he repeats, he was accused. This was true even in the sense that it was the Sadducees who pursued him, whereas the Pharisees absolved. The Apostle continued to tell of his conversion, of the vision of Our Lord and the mission given by Him. For fulfilling this he was persecuted, yet his doctrine was only what the prophets foretold, "that Christ should suffer, and be the first that should rise from the dead." The pagan Festus was not impressed with the extraordinary story; and in a loud voice interrupted St. Paul, saying: "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad." St. Paul, unabashed, appealed to the knowledge and conscience of the king; "for I am persuaded," said the Apostle, "that none of these things are hidden from him: for neither was any of these things done in a corner." Agrippa was well aware, doubtlessly, what marvelous things had occurred in Jerusalem, and throughout all Palestine. Hence the Apostle asked confidently, "Believest thou the prophets, O King Agrippa? I know that thou believest." What hope was there in the noble zeal of the great herald of the Faith as he thus preached Christianity, its cross and its resurrection, to this illustrious audience? "In a little thou persuadest me to become a Christian," was the only answer of this last of the house of Herod. "I would to God," added the great-hearted St. Paul, "that both in a little and in much, not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, should become such as I also am, except these bands. And the king rose up, and the governor, and Bernice, and they that sat with them. And when they were gone aside, they spoke among themselves, saying: This man hath done nothing worthy of death or of bands. And Agrippa said to Festus: This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed to Cæsar."

St. Paul's discourse was not entirely in vain; for the official report sent with him to Rome was favorable; and so he not only escaped death, but had liberty to preach the Gospel under surveillance, and write to his beloved converts.

Agrippa was far from sympathizing with the national, or even, apparently, with the religious, aspirations of the Jews. He sided with the Romans against them in the last dreadful war, and died in old age in the reign of Trajan.

#### CHAPTER XV

## THE TEMPESTUOUS VOYAGE OF ST. PAUL TO ROME

(Acts xxvii. 1 — xxviii. 15.)

It is supposed, or calculated, that the Roman procurator Festus arrived in Cæsarea toward the end of June, A. D. 61; and that St. Paul, with the other prisoners, was embarked about mid-August of the same year. The voyage, which, in favorable weather, could have been made perhaps in two weeks, actually took seven months, at least two of which were spent in storm and danger. A Roman centurion, named Julius, was put in charge of the prisoners and soldiers, some of the latter, it may be, returning with their officer after their mission with Porcius Festus, the procurator, was accomplished. The Augustan cohort, to which Julius belonged, was, it is said, not known in Palestine; but was, probably, a special military band created by the emperor. The courtesy and loyalty shown by the centurion to St. Paul during the voyage proves how much he was impressed by his character, by his public discourses, no doubt, in Cæsarea, and finally by

the favorable official report of the prisoner which he carried. The ship was bound for Adramyttium (as the Greek text shows), a city not far from Troas, in Mysia, and it may have been the purpose of the military guard to march across Macedonia by the great Roman road. St. Luke, his "beloved physician," accompanied St. Paul. as his narrative discloses; and with them were Aristarchus of Philippi, with the Ephesian disciples, Tychicus and Trophimus. One day's favorable sail brought them to Sidon, some sixtyseven miles north on the Phenician coast, where there were many disciples, and where St. Paul was known and loved (Acts xi. 19; xv. 3; xxi. 2, 4). "And Julius, treating Paul courteously, permitted him to go to his friends, and to take care of himself." They apparently intended to sail, south of Cyprus, more directly west; but the winds, Etesian as they were called, blowing stiffly from the northwest, obliged them to keep between Cyprus and Syria. So, sailing to leeward of the island, they rounded its long northeastern cape, and continued - on the Cilician Sea — between Cyprus and Cilicia; then south of Pamphylia, until they reach Myra (as we have the name in Greek), the former capital of Lycia, a city situated a mile inland, on the bank of the Andriacus. It was only a ten days' sail from Myra to Italy; but the Etesian winds, which usually yield to the breezes from the south, at

the end of August, continued to blow roughly. Here they transshipped to a large Alexandrian wheat vessel, which was going to Italy, and which carried many passengers. To the long promontory of Cnidus - for they had to keep by the land — was only twenty-four hours; but now, sailing slowly, they spent many days; and could not make its safe Gulf of Halicarnassus. On the contrary, instead of being able to sail between Greece and Crete, they were driven south of this island to the southwest. "With much ado sailing by "Cape Salmone, they turned round the southern coast of Crete, and midway came to Fair Havens, so called still. Near it, at the distance of a two hours' walk, are now seen the ruins of Lasea (not Thalassa, unless given this name popularly). Fair Havens was sheltered from the winds then blowing, to some extent at least; but not from the west or south. It would appear from the Acts that "much time was spent" here; and St. Paul saw in spirit their coming danger, and warned them not to venture out on the sea. But the centurion agreed with the master of the ship and the pilot, whose human wisdom seemed more conclusive, that, if at all possible, it would be better to make the entirely safe port of Phænix, a city some thirty miles west toward the end of Crete. This harbor, if we take the general conformation of the shore "looks toward the southwest and

northwest." But the expression is explained in seaman's fashion, to mean that a boat entering either mouth of the harbor would "look southwest or northwest." Sailing was more dangerous, for it was the end of September, the fast of the Christian Quarter Tense, or of the Atonement of the Jews, being past. There was an alluring south wind blowing as they loosed from Asson and sailed by the shore. But quickly there burst upon them "a typhonic" northeaster, or Levanter, that drove them fiercely southwest toward the Libyan quicksands and destruction. They ran under Clauda (as in Greek), an island twenty-three miles from their starting-point; and in its relative shelter drew up the boat on deck, with great difficulty, the apostolic band assisting with their own hands. The ship's timbers were being sprung, and so they undergirded them, or bound them round with hawsers, and lowered the sailvard, holding the ship so to the wind that they might still hope to escape foundering. They were "mightily tossed with the tempest," and lightened the ship by throwing overboard what they could, save the cargo of wheat. All apparently in vain; hence on the third day, all hands are employed to throw out the tackling; namely, we suppose, the great main yard. Ancient mariners were guided by the sun or stars, but in this typhoon, neither could be seen, and all hope of safety seemed lost. In their

danger and distress the travelers ate but little; and now St. Paul exhorts them to be of good cheer, for an angel of the good God, whom he served, had assured him on the previous night that not one of them should perish. He foretold their coming soon to an island; and on the fourteenth night, no doubt because they heard the roaring of the surf, the shipmen deemed they were near some shore. They sounded, and found they were in twenty fathoms of water, and soon after in fifteen. Fearing that their vessel would be broken on the rough beach, they threw out four anchors from the stern. These fortunately held fast; and, as is touchingly said, "they wished for the day." The crew now determined to abandon the passengers and save themselves in the boat. It was lowered into the sea, under pretense of throwing out more anchors from the prow, but at the full length of the chain or rope. But St. Paul understood the plot, and warned the centurion, that if such a selfish act was done, those in the ship, and likely those in the boat, would not be saved: nor could they be, humanly speaking, if the experienced sailors had abandoned the ship. The soldiers immediately cut the ropes with their swords and "let the boat fall off" and drift away. The light of day having broken, and safety being apparently in sight, St. Paul exhorted them to eat; and he himself "taking bread, gave thanks to God in the sight

of them all; and when he had broken it, he began to eat." From the words used, some suppose St. Paul celebrated the Eucharistic consecration. They were all now of better cheer, "and they also took some meat." "They knew not the land; but they discovered a certain creek that had a [level] shore, into which they minded, if they could, to thrust in the ship." They raised the anchors, untied the rudder bands (of the two steering paddles, namely) and let the paddles fall to the water; they lifted their sail again perhaps a fore or storm sail - and committing themselves to the sea, made towards the shore. They ran, however, on what was apparently a reef, supposed to be that now deeper under water in what has been identified as the Bay of St. Paul, on the northeastern shore of Malta. The prow stuck fast, and the stern was broken by the wild sea. The soldiers, responsible with their own lives for their prisoners, gave the rough counsel that they should be slain lest they escape; but the grateful centurion would not allow it for St. Paul's sake. "And he commanded that they who could swim should cast themselves into the sea, and save themselves, and get to land." And the rest, with the aid of the swimmers, reached the shore on every floating thing to be had. "And so it came to pass that every soul got safe to land."

The people of the island soon gathered to see

the shipwrecked strangers, told them that this was Melita (Malta), and treated them with "no small courtesy"; they are called barbarians, but only in the Greek sense, that is, without Greek culture, or not Greeks. Possibly there was a mixture of Greek in this Punic people. A large fire was made, by reason of the rain and cold, to which St. Paul himself would furnish his faggots. From the bundle, when laid on the fire, a hitherto torpid snake fastened on his hand, which made the natives suspect that he had been guilty of murder, and had escaped from the waves only to meet his fate on the shore. But as, contrary to their expectations, St. Paul did not swell up and die quickly, they said he must be a god. The drenched and hungry wanderers were in or near the possessions of the Roman Publius, the Protos of the island. This local title, verified by inscriptions, seems to prove that he was the chief official, appointed by the proconsul of Sicily. With generous kindness he entertained the strangers for three days. But not without reward; for his father, being very ill, was miraculously cured by St. Paul. This made so extraordinary an impression that "all who had diseases in the island came and were healed." Great was the honor paid to the saint and his companions, in consequence; and they were, literally, "laden with such things as were necessary" when going away. They remained three months — from mid-November to mid-February, when navigation was again open.

It is needless to say that the omission of the fact of the preaching of St. Paul and the conversion of those early Maltese with their chief officer is no reason whatsoever for supposing that they were not converted. The contrary has always been the tradition of the island; and surely the cures and teaching of St. Paul were reason enough. That Publius became the first bishop is told by many ancient authors, amongst others, by Bede. And the faith of the Maltese has ever burned brightly since, in spite of the sullen fact that they were for generations under the yoke of the Saracens.

Finding here another Alexandrian ship, with the favorite patrons Castor and Pollux, they sailed eighty miles to great and famous Syracuse. Then, after three days, they pass through the Straits of Messina; and probably, because of currents, pause a day at Rhegium. Then, with the favoring south wind, they enter, the second day, the beautiful and much frequented port of Puteoli near Naples, the great emporium of Alexandrian wheat. Here, "finding brethren, we [the apostolic band] were desired to tarry with them seven days"—a long time, the courteous centurion Julius, perhaps now converted to the faith of Paul, consenting. There remained 140 miles to Rome, to be made on foot. The

brethren at the imperial city had been notified by some fervent friends, and they came out actually forty miles, to the Forum of Appius, near the Pontine Marshes, to meet them. Another band awaited ten miles farther on, at the Three Tayerns. No wonder that the wayworn apostles "gave thanks to God and took courage" in this strange, imperious, and imperial land. They cross the Campagna on the Appian Way; and the glowing, or, it may be, tear-dimmed, eyes of the great Apostle of the Nations rest on Rome, which he had so much longed to see; and his insatiable heart exulted within him as he contemplated what was already. or soon to be, the Mother and Mistress of all the Churches. He entered, it is supposed, in March, A. D. 62, in the eighth year of Nero.

#### CHAPTER XVI

#### IN ROME

(Acts xxviii. 16-31.)

CT. PAUL had spent about sixteen years in his Sextraordinary missions when he came to Rome. It was enough for any human being; it was superhuman, and God saw that it was enough, or nearly enough. Having entered the city, the centurion Julius took his prisoners, it is supposed, to the quarters, or barracks of the prætorian cohorts, chosen troops which formed the imperial guard. The words of the friendly officer who had brought him, and the favorable report from Festus, the procurator, obtained for the Apostle the advantage of hiring his own lodging, accompanied however by a soldier, to whom he was chained by the wrist, as was usual. His measure of liberty was shown by his invitation to the chiefs of the Jews to visit him three days after his arrival. The three days were spent in the joyous company of his many Christian friends. The captive Apostle defended himself before the representatives of his race; and again - and it is remarkable - insisted that he was chained for the hope of Israel; namely, that of the resurrection. This proved that his reference

to this great doctrine before the council of Jerusalem was not a ruse to set the Sadducees and Pharisees against one another. The Roman Jews, however, had no news from Palestine of any charge against St. Paul; and desired, they said, to hear from him the doctrines of Christianity; for, they continued, "as concerning this sect, we know that it is everywhere contradicted." "There came very many to him unto his lodgings; to whom he expounded, testifying the kingdom of God, and persuading them concerning Jesus, out of the law of Moses and the prophets, from morning until evening. And some believed the things that were said; but some believed not. And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed," St. Paul sadly repeating the word of the Holy Ghost condemning their hardness of heart, and announcing that the Gentiles would hear, and therefore salvation was offered to them.

"And he remained two whole years in his own hired lodgings; and he received all who came in to him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, without prohibition." A glorious occupation, and worthy of St. Paul.

And so ends the story of the Acts of the Apostles. The number of converts made by the great captive must have been countless; the number of apostolic souls stimulated and formed, likewise



ST. PAUL PREACHING TO THE JEWS IN ROME From the painting by A. Baur



innumerable. In particular, it is supposed that his teaching penetrated amongst the soldiers, for the guard was often changed. St. Luke, St. Timothy, and St. Mark were with him, and the devoted Aristarchus, called his "fellow-captive." Tychicus brought news from the great theater of his ministry, Ephesus; Epaphroditus brought abundant alms from the beloved Philippians; Epaphras, the bishop of Laodicea, came to consult him about the nascent heresies. Onesimus, a runaway slave from the Lycus valley, beyond Ephesus, found his natural refuge in Rome; and having probably heard of St. Paul before, sought him and was baptized: he was sent back with an epistle to his Christian owner, Philemon, and afterward was made bishop. During his first stay in Rome, St. Paul wrote, as seems most probable, what are called the epistles of the captivity — the one just mentioned, with the epistles to the Philippians, the Colossians, and the Ephesians. In the Letter to the Philippians an interesting light is thrown on the progress of the Faith: for in it are sent the salutations of those in "Cæsar's household"-"All the saints whom Tacitus soon after called a great multitudel salute you; especially those that are of Caesar's household" (Philipp. iv. 22). Amongst the most devoted of all St. Paul's friends were his former hosts, Saints Aquila and Priscilla, now in Rome. The first abode and place of

teaching of St. Peter is said to have been the house afterward called the Church of St. Priscilla (Prisca), on the Aventine. By them it is thought the Prince of the Apostles was introduced to the noble family of Pudens. And it is a curious and interesting fact that the cemetery where Pudens and his daughters St. Praxedes and St. Pudentiana were buried was called the Catacombs of St. Priscilla.

## CHAPTER XVII

## ST. PAUL SET FREE. SUBSEQUENT MISSIONS. DEATH

CT. PAUL shows in the letters of his captivity his conviction of approaching liberation. The delay of his trial seems to have been owing to the failure of his Jewish accusers to appear from Judea. Their own troubles there were becoming more frequent and more acute. Festus the procurator died in Judea at the beginning of A. D. 62, and before his successor, Albinus, came, the high priest, Annas the Younger, the creature of Agrippa II, determined to kill St. James the Less, bishop of Jerusalem. He was thrown from a terrace of the temple and stoned, and while praying for his murderers, was killed with a fuller's mallet. Other disorders followed, pointing to the last fatal insurrection in A. D. 66, in which the city and temple of Jerusalem sank to ruin in blood and flames. St. Paul was set free in the spring of 64, a few months before the outbreak of the indescribable persecution of Nero. With regard to his subsequent movements there is much uncertainty. As his set purpose was to go from Rome to Spain (Rom.

xv. 28), there is no reason for supposing that he did not go thither directly after he was liberated. St. Clement of Rome testified, thirty years after St. Paul's death, that the Apostle had preached "to the confines of the West," which, especially for a Roman, must have included Spain. Later testimonies, but still very old, render his Spanish mission "a certainty" for critics who do not stupidly look upon Church history as a concoction. Returning from Spain, the Apostle's heart would naturally lead him to Macedonia and Corinth. In his first epistle to St. Timothy, written probably from Macedonia, he expresses his intention of going to Ephesus (1 Tim. iii. 14; iv. 13). He went as far as, and probably no farther than, Miletus. There he left Trophimus ill (2 Tim. iv. 20). He passed through Troas, probably on his return, and abode with Carpus; for he left there his cloak and manuscripts (2 Tim. iv. 13). In Nicopolis, the capital of Epirus, he determined to spend the winter, and thither he summons Titus, with whom he had gone to Crete, where he appointed him bishop. He visited, we may suppose, for probably the second time, Illyria and Dalmatia. Some suppose that he was arrested for the Faith in Nicopolis in the beginning of A. D. 67; and that, having again appealed to Cæsar, he was sent to Rome. But the testimony afforded by the historian Eusebius is considered far weightier. He quotes St. Dionysius, one of the first bishops of Corinth, to the effect that Saints Peter and Paul met in Corinth, and went together to Rome in the spring of A. D. 67. This was the tradition of Corinth in the second century.

It is the unanimous testimony of antiquity that Saints Peter and Paul were confined in the underground Mamertine prison, cut in the rock, under the Capitol. To this place, and in the days of Nero, it is clear that few would dare to come, and none with impunity. Moreover, the fearful persecution had thinned and scattered the Christians of the city, two-thirds of which had been burned. St. Paul, old and suffering, felt his loneliness. One hero, however, came all the way from Ephesus; and, as the Greek text tells, sought out St. Paul until he found him; and then ministered assiduously unto him. This was Onesiphorus. He may have died in Rome, as some suppose; and thus, as St. Paul writes, "Only Luke was with him." We have a few precious facts of his last imprisonment in his second Epistle to St. Timothy, fitly called "the testament of the dying soldier." Here he tells that at his "first question," or examination, he was quite alone. But he seems to have been remanded, escaping for the moment, as he says, "out of the lion's mouth." Then it would appear that he had a certain measure of liberty,

for clearly his Christian friends came; and at the close of the Epistle he sends the salutations of the senator Pudens; of St. Linus, who succeeded to the lowly throne of Peter; of others, too, and, indeed, "of all the brethren." He implores Timothy to come to him from Ephesus "before the winter" sets in; and, passing through Troas, to bring his books and cloak—this he needed badly in the Mamertine.

But suddenly came the end; and on the same day as St. Peter, according to the voice of Christian tradition, which knew best, he was led out by the Ostian Way about three miles beyond the city, perhaps to keep his execution secret. Coming to the Aquae Salviae, now the Tre Fontane, his head was struck off with a sword; and the body brought half-way back to be interred where now stands his basilica "without the walls." On his tomb was set the ancient inscription, "To Paul, Apostle and Martyr," which is a description sufficient and complete.

St. Peter, not being a Roman citizen, was crucified like his Master, but with his head downward in reparation for his fault, as all ancient traditions relate. He died in Nero's circus near the Vatican, where the dread immolation of the Christian multitudes was consummated by the imperial monster in A. D. 64. Here the Prince of the Apostles rests; and over him, within, on the base of the dome, to which Diana's marvel was

as a cell, runs now in majestic Latin the inscription: "Thou art Peter; and upon this Rock I will build My Church." Wherever written, these words will be true forever.

THE END



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